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JUNE 2009

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BUT IN
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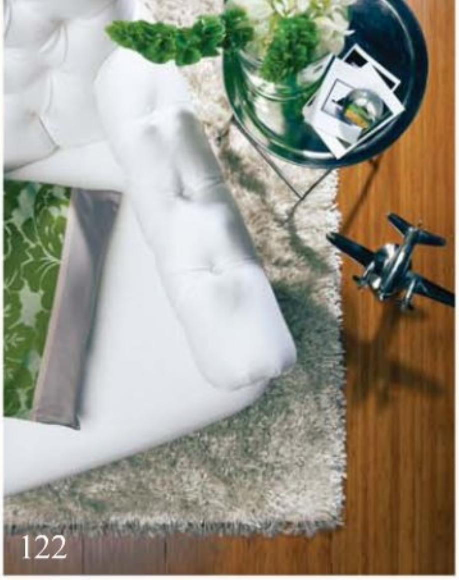

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NZ HOUSE & GARDEN

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Editor Kate Coughlan at home.

ABOVE: Go hunting for this squirrel ornament on page 38. LEFT: *NZ Gardener* editor Lynda Hallinan highlights the fresh tones of nature in her home (page 52).

from the editor

A TRADITIONAL BLUE and white colour scheme comes into its own at this time of the year, don't you think? The Indian summer has departed and the arriving chill is knocking the leaves from the trees and darkening the days before I've said goodbye to morning. Worse, I know it will get chillier and darker yet.

Colour experts say blue is the most optimistic colour in the spectrum. Is that because it is the colour of a sunny sky? I spent Easter with my mother in Central Otago and every day she pointed out just how beautiful was the blue of the sky. I learned to look for that pale, uplifting white-blue and for beauty in the simplest things.

For this issue, we have created a happy blue and white cover to take us into the darkest days of the year. We found a lovely sunny family room in which to shoot it and now we all want just such a room in our own homes. Blue hasn't been a big colour in interiors in recent years but watch out for its comeback. In our May issue we devoted a whole Shopping page to the blues so expect to see more of it in coming months.

Quite different from the blue and white cover theme are the interiors in the home of *NZ Gardener* editor, the irrepressible Lynda Hallinan. Lynda's presence does a great deal to enliven the corridors of Fairfax Magazines, especially when she went on an extended trip, leaving a bag of seed potatoes under her desk to hatch fruit flies and torment all her colleagues. And the colour of Lynda's interior would be… pretty much wall-to-wall green and white. Very stylish is our Lynda, and her house is gorgeous. See it on page 52. The planets must be in line this month. We'd no sooner finished exclaiming over Lynda's green and white interior when style editor Tracey Strange announced that she'd selected a whole page of gorgeous green items for our Shopping pages this month. Green, the colour of peace and harmony, works well for me in these times. Also sending the spirits soaring is the robust red entrance hall in the Rieper home on page 18. I love the bold use of colour and find even looking at it invigorating. How about you?

I hope you enjoy the interesting and beautiful houses and gardens we've gathered this month.

Kate

PS There's a bonus for you in this issue – a magazine within a magazine, thanks to the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA). We have worked with them on a mini-magazine showing the many ways in which we can make our homes energy efficient. If your power bill looks like mine, then you'll probably find this supplement as useful and enjoyable as I have. There are some smart ideas for conservation, cost savings, and how to have a warm, healthy and stylish home. Look for it on page 99.

ON THE COVER: Longboy and blue bowl from Meluka; coffee table and lantern from Cocoa; cushions and napkins from Freedom Furniture; candleholders, tray and rug from Corso De' Fiori; pear from Cavit & Co; fabrics from Martha's. Iris, a Jack Russell/foxy cross, belongs to photographer Mark Smith.

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NZHOUSE &GARDEN introducing

Jane Ussher
Photographer

Widely regarded as the country's premier portrait photographer, Jane Ussher has photographed some of the most important figures in our recent political, sporting and social history. She lives in a contemporary Auckland home crammed with art and sculptures, many created by her husband, Grant. Up until now, she has not had any of her own work on display – but a recent trip to Antarctica yielded one image that is destined for her study wall. The best of her Antarctic images will be exhibited in Auckland later this year. Jane trained at Wellington Polytechnic and joined the *New Zealand Listener* after graduating – an association that lasted almost 30 years and was encapsulated in her 2004 book, *Portraits*. Jane's now embracing a new career as a freelance photographer. In this issue, she photographed Down to Earth craftsman Michael Grace (page 97).

Kerry Engelbrecht
Books editor

Kerry has had a thing for books from an early age and still has a dog-eared copy of her childhood favourite, *Meeow*. A collection of political literature gathered during her South African newspaper journalism days is now being pushed out of the bookcase by beautiful new interiors, gardening, eco and art books. But Kerry can't resist the feel and smell of old books and it's a rare copy of a 1930s title, *Egypt Through the Ages*, bought by her grand-father in Cairo during World War II, that she treasures most. Kerry spent several years sub-editing for *Cuisine* and *NZ House & Garden*, and did a stint as deputy editor of *NZ Gardener*, but her full-time role these days is mothering her feisty two-year-old, Max. In her downtime she lives other, more peaceful lives through the pages of the books she reviews for this magazine.

Prue Dashfield
Writer

After 25 years as a feature writer on newspapers and about six months after buying a house in Auckland, Prue Dashfield decided to forsake financial security for the exciting, financially acrobatic existence of the freelancer. Since then, the former *NZ House & Garden* deputy editor has become extremely retiring in her habits and only her byline is seen in public. However, working from home has enabled her to get a dog to walk her and to annoy the cat, and to become a homestay mum for English language students, which she loves. It has also improved her DIY skills, allowed her plenty of time to read and taught her that there is nothing in this world as cheap, nutritious and versatile as a bag of dried beans. In this issue, Prue visits Lynda Hallinan at home (page 52).

PHOTOGRAPH OF JANE USSHER BY GRANT GALLAGHER; KERRY ENGELBRECHT AND PRUE DASHFIELD BY JANE USSHER

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talk back

A TIZZ OVER FIZZ

In your article on packed lunches by Peter Gordon [*A Cut Above*, April], which put my Marmite sarnies to shame, I was intrigued to see the words "healthy, inspiring" accompanied by a photograph of a can of Coke. As a general practitioner trying to get the healthy eating message across to my patients – many of whom think BMI means Bring Me Ice cream – this is an unhelpful image. However, I do promise to try at least one of Peter's recipes this coming week (with orange juice, of course)

Alan Wright, Hastings

WINNING WAYS WITH WHITE

Your April issue of *NZ House & Garden* helped me win a long-standing argument. My partner and I are looking at painting our house but could not see eye to eye. She wanted to go with bright colours and I wanted plain white. It wasn't until your mag came out and I got to show her how classic and fabulous white-painted walls look that she agreed with me.

Bob Jones, Napier

HOW TO GET A MAN

I could not believe my eyes when I read your description of homeowner Sylvia Sandford [*In the Limelight*, April]: "dressed in leggings and boots, she is a picture of glamour, so it's no surprise that she has had six proposals of marriage in her 58 years". Whoo hoo, now everyone knows how to get a man! Gee, thanks *NZ House & Garden*! I'm sure you won't print this, but honestly…

Gill Ward (Mrs), Kapiti Coast

A NANA FANATIC WRITES

Talk about channelling Grandma! Your May issue has sent me to vintage heaven. That pink Cath Kidston sofa in Sharon Steed's sitting room [*Channelling Charm*] is to die for and I am so excited about the ladies who use children's patterns from the 1950s and vintage fabrics to make clothes. It's inspiring to see other people out there actively pursuing their "Nana obsessions", and even making a living from it. The urge to flick right through this month's issue was so strong that I didn't even stop to make coffee till the second read-through. I'm grateful to know I'm not entirely on my own in a parallel universe of Sanderson linens, junk-shop china and embroidered doilies reinvented. When my children raise their eyebrows and accuse me of wearing curtains, I'll be able to furnish them with proof of this, and point out that there are other husbands out there who go along with passing impulses to paint things pink and cover every surface with cabbage roses! What a joy.

Jacqui Wagstaff, Hawera

NOT FOR SALE

I buy your magazine the day it comes out and read it from start to finish three times before I sometimes sell it again on TradeMe. I had to laugh this morning as my partner came out of the men's room and said, "Can you not sell this magazine? It's fantastic." Your mag must have made quite a first impression. He said there were loads of ideas we could apply around our half-finished house.

GA Kennedy, Napier

NOW WHERE'S MY LATTE…

When we tramped into a hut in the Otoko Valley, South Westland, recently, the first thing I unpacked was my *NZ House & Garden* (wrapped in a plastic bag for the two river crossings). I could have worked interior magic in the hut but I wasn't allowed. But I did take home some lovely moss I gathered in the bush (for some flower arranging) and a lovely egg-shaped stone for my Easter table setting!

Linda Dalley, Christchurch >

We welcome your feedback: email sally.duggan@nzhouseandgarden.co.nz

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QUESTION ANSWERED

I was interested to read about Deborah and David Bunyard's stunning new home [*A River Runs Through It*, April]. My great-uncle, Niels Madsen, owned the petrol station there in the 1920s. It was originally built lower down near the river, but was moved to higher ground when the Karapiro dam opened and the water level rose. I often pass this lovely spot and wondered what was being built there, so many thanks for putting me in the picture.

Susan Gripton, Omokoroa

NOT A GOOD LOOK

I have been a loyal customer ever since your magazine began, but am now one unhappy reader. I got out my April issue and, as is my normal habit, read it while eating my breakfast. Soon I had started to feel frustrated and annoyed, as I was struggling to read the articles. Aha! I realised that my eyesight had not deteriorated in a month, but the size of the print in the magazine has been altered. Who is responsible for this decision?

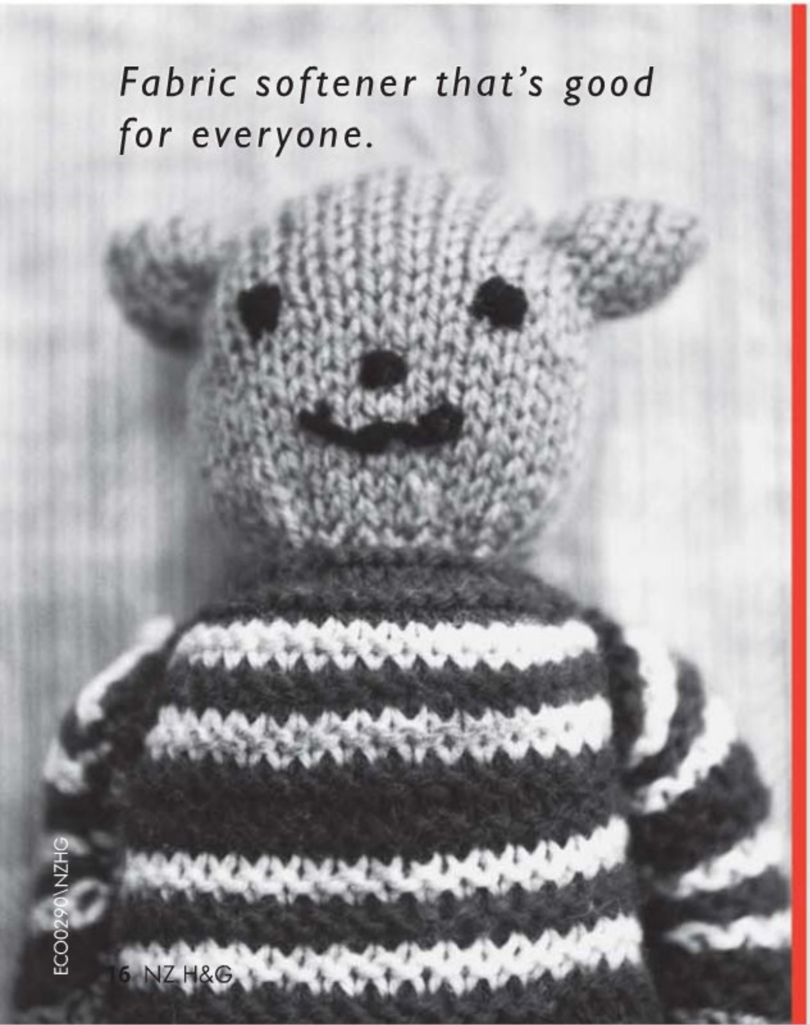
Sharon Richardson, Tauranga

Editor's reply: We dropped the type size slightly with our April redesign and at the same time increased the white space between lines, which our tests around the office suggested would keep the legibility about the same. We have, however, had one or two complaints about this from readers, so we'll be reassessing this issue before starting work on the pages for our July issue.

A MATERIAL DIFFERENCE

One article in your April issue magazine really touched my heart and that was the *Cover Art* story about Chris Kenna and her love of quilting. I thought her passion was amazing and I love how she sometimes doesn't even know how her project is going to turn out – she just follows her nose. The selection of work you featured was exquisite and I showed it to a couple of ladies who make quilts for our cancer children, again reiterating the love that people like Chris get out of making these quilts. Local people in Hawke's Bay spend many hours making quilts for our children and seeing the joy on their faces makes me realise what a wonderful thing these people are doing.

TK Kennedy, Hastings



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Palace coup

Building a lavish home in a former timber yard has been an expansive experience for one Napier couple **STORY** ANN PACKER / **PHOTOGRAPHS** PAUL McCREDIE

THIS PAGE: Viv Rieper had long admired this piano, which came from an estate auction.

FACING PAGE: The sitting room's elaborate doors are French, though they were not originally a pair.

PREVIOUS PAGES: Napier artist Arie Plug spent six full-on weeks creating the mural of Greek goddess Athena.

WHO WOULD HAVE believed it? Hidden away behind a warehouse facade and electronic gates, surrounded by light industry in the heart of the Napier suburb of Pandora, is a palazzo-like residence. Viv and Catriona Rieper's capacious home even boasts a stunning interior mural depicting the goddess Athena resting after battle.

The cavernous spaces, wrought-iron gates and encaustic-tiled patios give the residence a strongly Mediterranean flavour, but its location on the banks of a tidal stream – home to native kingfishers, herons and pukeko – makes it Kiwi to the core. Across the stream is the southern edge of the Ahuriri estuary walk.

The Riepers, both inveterate collectors, married six years ago – Catriona calls it "a marriage of antique convenience" – and came to live here in 2004 in a tiny room at the front of the property, where Viv now runs his architectural design practice. >

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: The bronze chandelier in the sitting room was found in a dealer's shed. The upstairs sitting room looks out over the Ahuriri estuary. Catriona received the ocelot as a Valentine's gift. Catriona Rieper.

THESE PAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: In the kitchen, high windows were placed to allow the sun to come through at daybreak; to the right a refurbished church window lights the stairwell. Looking back to the sitting room past the guest bathroom and library. Catriona's love of French style can be seen in the kitchen, reflected in a huge vintage mirror. The cellar-like dining room, built into a low-ceilinged lean-to, was the last part of the home to be completed; Viv made the table from architectural salvage.

They developed a studio overlooking the stream – now guest accommodation – so they could live in reasonable comfort for the 18 months it took to build a habitable home.

"We had been living in a big old 13-room house that we spent our whole life maintaining – and it was cold," says Viv. "We didn't want to move to the suburbs with neighbours right alongside and we didn't want to move to the country and own land. I needed an office for my work, we owned this industrial property and I was aware how nice and warm it was. It was just a matter of pulling it all together."

The Rieper home is now furnished with some extraordinary treasures – including the sort of architectural salvage you can accumulate only if you have a warehouse to put it in. Viv's Valentine's gift to Catriona last year was a stuffed ocelot with green glass eyes, found at an auction house – and delivered with a red rose in its mouth. "I did do a double take when I saw it," she says.

When not on duty at the suburban medical centre where she has worked for 18 years, Catriona loves simply being at home: sitting outside with a cup of coffee and a magazine, photographing the birdlife or developing her riverbank vegetable garden on land now regenerating after bulldozers cleared a thick layer of sawdust.

Viv has done much of the hands-on building work – painting concrete floors to look like marble tiles, washing panels with copper solution to create ancient-looking doors and designing a patio layout to make the most of the North African tiles he discovered on a renovation project.

His ground-level design for the house included spacious entertaining areas that flow from the grilled entry into a formal sitting room. Down a dimly lit corridor, past a library of antiquarian books – housed in an antique chemist's cabinet – is a low-ceilinged dining hall tucked beneath the lean-to roofline of the old premises. >

THESE PAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: A master craftsman created the built-in bed for Catriona's grand-daughter. French-style furnishings in the bedroom. The Rieper home turns its back to the street to open to a tidal stream. High walls enclose the patio off the ground-floor kitchen. Three sets of French doors open to a courtyard paved in Moroccan tiles found in central Hawke's Bay.

In the sitting room, an array of French furniture, an early Broadwood piano (in need of tuning) and a bronze chandelier found in a dealer's shed are enough to stop visitors in their tracks.

The eye-popping piece here, however, is local artist Arie Plug's richly coloured interpretation of the goddess Athena resting after battle. This is the first time that Arie, who is better known for his exquisite still-lifes, has worked on such a grand scale. Viv's fondness for Athena can also be seen elsewhere in the room in a bronze of the mythical horsewoman.

"It was just my madness, I guess," says Viv. "I love that sort of thing."

At the heart of the ground floor, a small second kitchen caters for parties, and a laundry and a gem of a guest bathroom are concealed behind studded doors given the patinated copper treatment by Viv.

The wine cellar's curved ceiling creates a long yet intimate space, with a custom-made rimu dining table that seats 20.

Upstairs – where all the views are of the estuary and the distant ranges, with just two small peephole windows looking on to the street – a more domestic setting has been created by Catriona.

Designed around a handsome salvaged Zanussi commercial oven, the main kitchen has a wall of gleaming white tiles and pale green cupboards plus freestanding units around a French oak kitchen table. A mix of everyday and French Provincial china fills one cabinet, and another holds Catriona's intriguing collection of around a dozen china dolls' heads.

The largest head in the group was found in the old area of Shanghai, the Bund, on a holiday trip. "Viv climbed over a pile of rubble to retrieve it – it was black – and we carried it in a backpack to our hotel, where he stood under the shower and scrubbed the head clean with a hotel tooth-brush. Then it had a trip round the world with us on the way home!"

Catriona's collection of religious art has been moved to an alcove adjoining the master bedroom, where a cabinetmaker has created a charming alcove bed for 11-year-old grand-daughter Bella's sleepovers. The master bedroom itself features a built-in wardrobe wall decorated to match the ornate lines of the French bedhead.

Outside, the landscaping is recently finished – the section has been paved and enclosed at the sides and protected from the water by a mesh fence. The stub of an elderly grapevine has been coaxed into new life as an arbour and Viv has built a simple jetty out over the stream. He's now looking for a dinghy for aquatic outings.

In the years since they arrived, the couple has worked hard on cleaning up the once-degraded waterway – a project that has taken the best part of five years. Now it's time to sit back and enjoy la dolce vita. ■

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People in glass houses

On a Northland hillside, tropical plants go mad while an Auckland couple chills out

STORY SHELLEY BRIDGEMAN / **PHOTOGRAPHS** KIERAN SCOTT

More than a few Northlanders raised a curious eyebrow when Reg and Chrissy Price built their house on a hilltop in rural Oakleigh, just south of Whangarei. Its large dimensions meant it was surely some sort of shed for storing farm implements. But that theory was dashed once the glass walls were fitted, at which point a few locals even wondered, somewhat wryly, if perhaps this Auckland couple was building a supermarket.

In fact, this is the Prices' weekender, a country retreat with a design that defies convention. Its floor plan is dominated by a central 16sqm glass atrium that immediately confounds the expectations of visitors at the main door. Thinking, not unreasonably, that they are stepping inside, guests are perplexed to discover they've gained access to a sprawling garden room.

It's a somewhat disorienting experience – like entering the outdoors. Reg and Chrissy never tire of reading a blend of surprise, delight and confusion on people's faces. A small internal dividing wall allows a peep through a pair of traditional arched windows into the interior garden area – a faux porch effect that only heightens the intrigue.

Four garden beds of subtropical planting are set into plain concrete flooring. Thanks to the sheltered conditions, and temperatures that reach 35°C, growth is lush and triffid-like; banana palms and fig trees have already reached the high-pitched UV-reflective glass ceiling. >

THESE PAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Reg and Chrissy Price soak up the view from a bar on castors, made to Chrissy's design. A convivial arrangement of woven sofas in the atrium. The entranceway never fails to surprise or bemuse first-time guests. The bach-style kitchen has no dishwasher. PREVIOUS PAGES: Chrissy and Reg. Flourishing tropicals in the atrium.

"We love pottering in the garden in the heaviest downpour, just because we can"

“The weather isn’t a consideration,” says Chrissy. “We love pottering in the garden in the heaviest downpour, just because we can.”

A long-time admirer of bold architecture, Reg relishes “the ambiguity of the structure”. So, is this space actually indoors or out? The answer is: it can be both. All nine of the 3.6-metre-high glass doors glide back, leaving an open-sided room beneath the translucent roof. “It’s like an umbrella on top,” says Reg. “We like an industrial look – materials such as concrete, glass and steel.”

Back in the late 1970s, Reg briefly studied architecture and, though he realised the life of a professional architect wasn’t for him, he still cherished the dream of conceptualising and building a home of his own. The Prices designed the house themselves and commissioned a draftsman to draw up the plans. Three cabins open into the main atrium, each with a designated function – kitchen/living zone, master retreat and guest wing.

This is the house that Reg built – literally. Shedding the suit, tie and briefcase of his regular job as a management consultant, he took a year off from devising customer strategies and, in conjunction with a local builder, got hammering, sawing, drilling, lifting and digging – losing eight kilograms in the intensely physical process.

“For me everything was a challenge,” he says. “The experience made me realise how uncoordinated I was.”

Digging two-metre-deep holes for each of the eight steel support posts was especially back-breaking. “That was torture, that was awful.” But it was worth it. >

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The queen-sized bunks in the guest room were designed with the couple’s London-based daughter Katey and friends in mind. A white damask bed cover ensures a crisp, fresh look in the master bedroom, where neutral-toned curtains and blinds frame the view.

FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The day bed on castors – also designed by Chrissy – can be moved around the 256sqm room to chase the sun and views. A patio heater takes the chill off winter evenings. Pool anyone? A colourful kitchen noticeboard. Chrissy catches up on reading in her cocoon chair.

FROM LEFT: Chrissy tends to the flowering creeper Black-eyed Susan (*Thunbergia alata*) near the main door. The property's cattle are frequently attracted to the "glass barn" by the sound of music wafting across the paddocks.

Personally labouring on the site helped keep the budget lean and mean and Reg also discovered he does some of his best thinking while doing hard graft. So, when the great glass barn was completed in October last year, he returned to consultancy work reinvigorated and brimming with ideas and fresh business plans.

Reg was born and raised on this dairy farm – and given the seven-hectare site by his parents – so he was all too familiar with the vagaries of the climate. In fact, it was the exposed, wind-swept conditions that led to the central idea on which the entire home was based. If inclement weather made outdoor areas largely inhospitable, then why not bring the outside in? This seemingly improbable concept was nonetheless founded on an unflinching logic.

Reg and Chrissy, who initially camped on the hill to determine the best building site, aimed to disturb the landscape as little as possible in the creation of their bolt-hole. "We had to take the top off the knoll but apart from that we wanted the house to look almost as if it had just landed from outer space," says Chrissy.

The grass has been allowed to grow right up to the house and little exterior landscaping has been done. She is a fan of the natural, rural vista. "I love seeing the blue sky all around, fluffy clouds then a green expanse from any one point."

Chrissy used to have her own fashion label, Chrissy R, and her design background and critical eye were invaluable when furnishing the interior. "We tried to keep it really simple – no frills. We didn't want to be too 'decor'," she says, admitting it was a challenge to strike the right balance between understated country living and the modern luxuries they both craved. Ultimately, compromise was key. So, though the kitchen has no dishwasher, there is a steam room – "very relaxing and not as masochistic as a dry sauna" – in a corner of the atrium.

It turns out that people who live in glass houses – especially glass houses with a 360 degree panorama of the countryside and a view across the mangrove flats to the upper Whangarei Harbour – end up hosting a great many visitors. Chrissy's mother often overnights here and city friends are lining up for a weekend in the guest cabin. Reg's parents and sister, who is also a neighbour, are always welcome – and locals regularly drop by unannounced bearing freshly made scones.

Feeling the pressure to conform to country standards, city slicker Chrissy has become expert in making fruit salad muffins and evidently her raspberry friands are already legendary in these parts. "I've had to spruce up my baking," she says. Reg has also had to instruct her in rural lingo and etiquette: cows graze in paddocks not fields and seven-wire fences must be climbed adjacent to a sturdy post rather than mid-wire.

To achieve optimal work-life balance, the Prices aim to spend about a third of their time at Oakleigh. Chrissy simply adores opening the bedroom curtains in the morning to find 40 "very friendly" cows staring right back at her through the window.

"After a few days, though, I start to hanker after the bright city lights and feel the urge to head back to our Ponsonby villa."

See more of this house at www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz

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Heaven scent

A beautiful perfume bottle is the jewel in June's crown

STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPH** BELINDA MERRIE

HOME FRAGRANCE Its shape alone – all sinuous curves and old-fashioned elegance – makes this perfume bottle covetable. Coloured glass is enjoying a revival and beautiful fragrance always makes a powerful statement; just think of those perfume classics that instantly remind you of good times. Fragrance is also part of creating a friendly home... your sensory welcome mat, you might say. John Penman hand-blown glass **perfume bottle** $130 from Tessuti, (09) 378 8490.

Lattice lace.
Fruit bowl $166 from BoConcept, (09) 630 0557.

Organic beauty.
Blue coral $599 from Republic Home, (09) 361 1137.

Mono magnificence.
Chair, one of a pair, $2850 for both from Mid Century Design, (09) 522 8561. **Cushion** from Bauhaus, (09) 302 2651 made with fabric sourced through Atelier Textiles, (09) 373 3866. Sheepskin stylist's own but similar versions can be sourced through GL Bowron, (03) 384 2609.

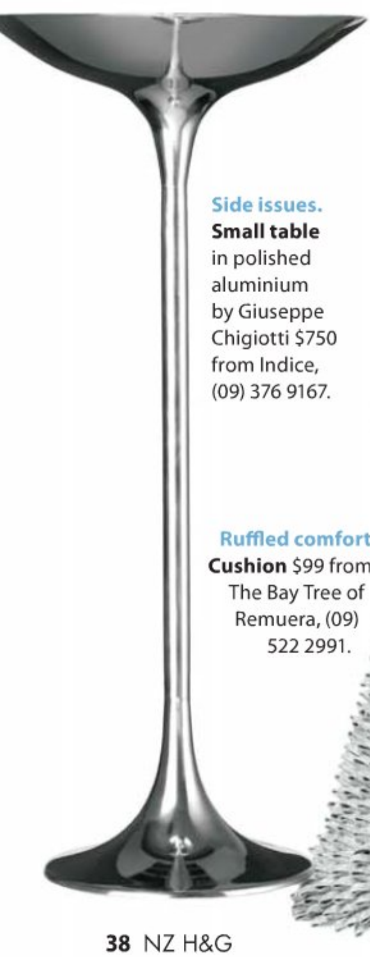
Feathered friend.
Eames House **bird** $290 from Cite, (09) 623 9233.

Straight lines.
Metal **footstool** $282 from Citta; for stockists, contact (09) 630 6177.

Smooth operator

Sumptuous shapes and neutral tones create harmony in your home

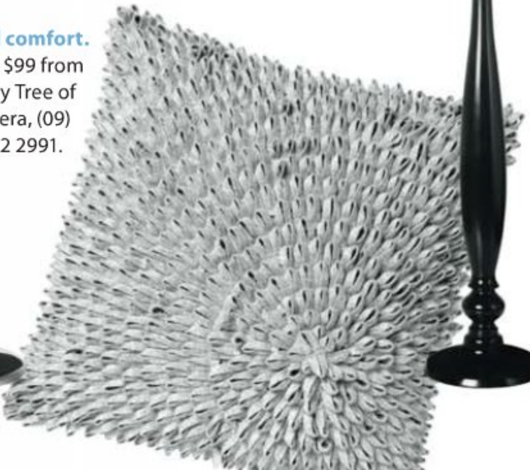
STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** BELINDA MERRIE



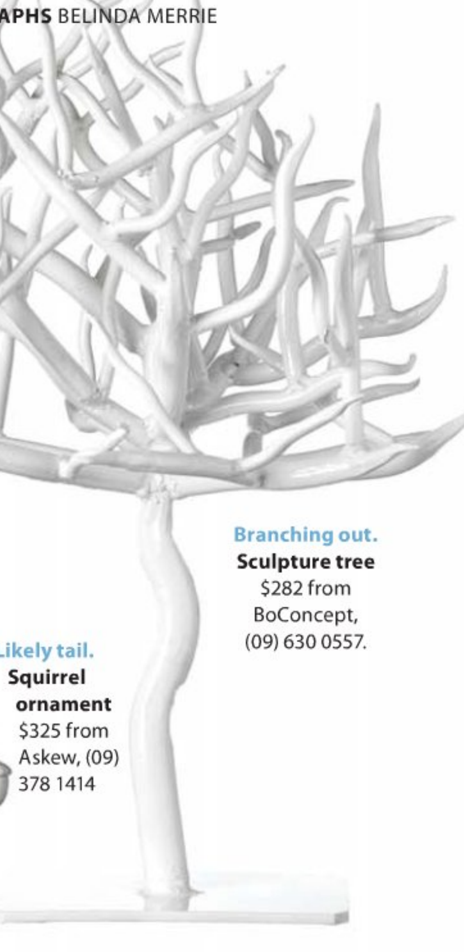
Side issues.
Small table in polished aluminium by Giuseppe Chigiotti $750 from Indice, (09) 376 9167.

Chin up.
Reindeer candlestick $95 from The Bay Tree of Remuera, (09) 522 2991.

Shades of black.
Standard **lamp** $750 from Cocoa Home and Living, contact (09) 379 7100 for stockists.



Ruffled comfort.
Cushion $99 from The Bay Tree of Remuera, (09) 522 2991.



Branching out.
Sculpture tree $282 from BoConcept, (09) 630 0557.

Likely tail.
Squirrel ornament $325 from Askew, (09) 378 1414

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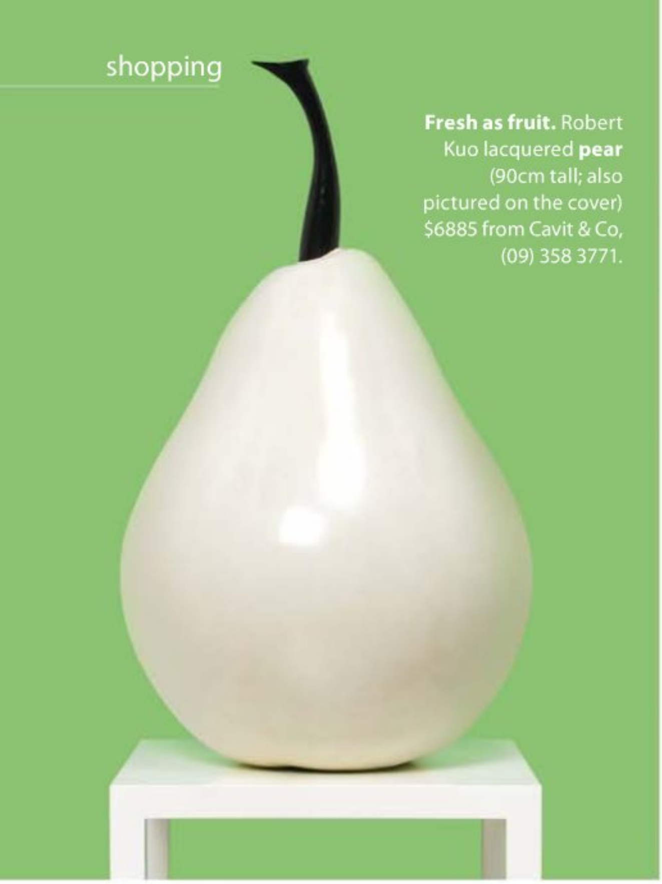

Fresh as fruit. Robert Kuo lacquered **pear** (90cm tall; also pictured on the cover) $6885 from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771.

Bottled out. Glass **lamp** $1250 (with shade) from Mid Century Design, (09) 522 8561.

Light as lace. Donna Wilson **place mat** $49.50 from Tessuti, (09) 378 8490.

Flutter buy. Framed **butterfly** $219 from Republic Home, (09) 361 1137.

Something fishy. Alessi **eggcup** $67, from Askew (09) 378 1414.

Pretty picture. Enamel **jug** $69 from Republic Home, (09) 361 1137.

A fresh take

Sharpen up your decor with shades of green

STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** BELINDA MERRIE

A fresh take. **Chair** $253 through French Country Collections, (09) 376 6440.

A little twist. Normann Copenhagen **vase** $66 from Design Denmark, (09) 361 3333.

Sitting pretty. Hoffi **seat** $440 from Design Denmark, (09) 361 3333.

Grass art. John Penman hand-blown **bowl** $288, from Tessuti (09) 378 8490.

Country elegance. **Cushion** $180.40 through French Country Collections, (09) 376 6440.

Sea of green. Frosted **vase** $454.60 from Corso De' Fiori, (09) 307 9166.

Natural colour. Hervé Gambs **lilies** $360 from Tessuti, (09) 378 8490.

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BACK TO BLACK Nothing creates drama quite like black. For inspiration, check out Maurice Kain's Goddess collection. For stockists, contact (09) 574 3200.

THREE OF THE BEST... *carafes*

MODERN
Contemporary twist. Bowl carafe $398 from Trumps, (09) 520 1215.

ART
Bold design. Decanter by Ron Gilad for Driade $395 from Indice, (09) 376 9167.

CLASSIC
Eternally elegant. Conical decanter $91 from Corso De' Fiori, (09) 307 9166.

New knobs can transform a room or piece of furniture in a flash. Small glass **knobs** $18 each from Madder & Rouge, (09) 522 1062.

Home front

Style editor Tracey Strange shares news and views from the home stores

"People want colour and texture in winter... not necessarily bright colours, but those that complement the neutral schemes so many have been going for"

– INTERIOR DESIGNER NEIL MCLACHLAN

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PRETTY NEST Actually called **Matryoshka**, Babushka nesting dolls are a Russian invention inspired by souvenir dolls from Japan. Nesting dolls $210 from Askew, (09) 378 1414.

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Home comforts

Pretty linen deserves to be put on show

WORDS & STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPH** BELINDA MERRIE

SMELLS OF HOME
Left to right: Durance **hand soap** $29.95 from Isabel Harris, (09) 522 1705; glass **jar** $35 from Madder & Rouge, (09) 522 1062; Voluspa jasmine **candle** $47.70 from Hedgerow, (09) 524 0843; Cote Bastide Amber body **lotion** $97, home **spray** $36.95 and frangipani **soaps** $7.50 each, all from Isabel Harris; Jo Malone **fragrances** from $100, (09) 309 4418; Importico **toilet bag** $56.20 from Hedgerow; silk **sachet** $29.95 from Isabel Harris.

FLORAL DISPLAY
From bottom: **towel** $37.80 from Citta, (09) 630 6177; **bath mats** $33.80 from Corso De' Fiori, (09) 307 9166, and $81 from Hedgerow; ceramic **flower** $98 from Madder & Rouge.

SOFTLY DOES IT
Bemboka **throw** (top) $450 from Hedgerow; mohair **throw** $219 from Trumps, (09) 520 1215; stool covered with bath mat fabric stylist's own.

GLORY CHEST
Beautiful linen should have a beautiful home. Painted **cabinet** $1495, contact Le Forge for stockists , (09) 638 7900. On top: **leaf ball** $196.90 from Trumps; Frette **quilts** $2260 (bottom) and $3140 from Cavit & Co, (09) 358 3771; butterfly scented **sachet** (on door) $25 from Madder & Rouge.

WELL STACKED
Fold linen uniformly for an eye-catching display. **Towels** and **bath sheets** from $36 to $47.25, all from Citta; **hand towels** $49 each from Madder & Rouge.

FRAGRANT FEATURES
Scented products are always luxurious. From bottom left: **face cloths** $9.60 and $14 from Hedgerow; frangipani **soaps** $7.50 each, Durance **linen water** $28.95 and Cote Bastide **bath salts** $99, all from Isabel Harris; **glass jar** with brush from Madder & Rouge.

COLOUR COORDINATES
Create harmony with balanced colour. From bottom: Linens & More **throw** $258 and Bemboka **throw** $450, both from Hedgerow; lilac **throw** $219 from Trumps.

PALE AND INTERESTING
Neutral colours work well in a bathroom. From bottom: striped **towel** $56.50, **bath mats** $44.60 and $33 and **towel** $36, all from Corso De' Fiori.

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New Zealand is a treasure trove for collectors of items from the Arts and Crafts Movement

STORY PAM NEVILLE / **STYLING** TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** BELINDA MERRIE

This arts and crafts lamp, typical of the William Morris school, is on sale for $2800 at Art and Industry, Auckland, (09) 630 0310.

FABRIC IN BACKGROUND BY BRUNSCHWIG & FILS, CONTACT DECORTEX E FAMIGLIA FOR STOCKISTS

LEFT: A Bernard Moore flambé vase, circa 1911, on a Liberty of London table, against modern fabric in the style of William Morris from Brunschwig & Fils. The table, $2200, and the vase, $3000, are for sale at Art and Industry in Auckland, (09) 630 0310.

THE ARTS AND CRAFTS Movement began in England in the 1860s as a reaction to the mass-production of machine-made items for the home. Artists and designers sought a return to hand craftsmanship and stressed high-quality, natural materials and simplicity of design. The decorative style of the Victorian era was suddenly seen as fussy and overdone.

New Zealand was an importer of goods from Liberty of London, the department store that fostered work from the era. Several agents brought quantities of Arts and Crafts Movement household and decorative items to our shores in the early years of the 20th century.

The heyday of the era was the late 1800s to about 1910, although historians often consider that the influence of arts and crafts continued until the end of the 1930s, overlapping with other styles, particularly art nouveau, which has much in common with the Arts and Crafts Movement.

The British pioneer of arts and crafts was William Morris. His wooden reclining Morris chair is still made in various forms and William Morris wallpaper is reproduced by Sanderson. Morris railed against "soulless" machine-made items and urged his disciples to "have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful".

In architecture, arts and crafts principles are seen in wood panelling, ceiling beams, wide-hearth fireplaces with inglenooks, and stained-glass windows. Classic arts and crafts items to look for include timber furniture of quarter-sawn oak, perhaps with cut-outs of upside-down hearts; hand-hammered metal jugs and jewellery, often with enamelled detail; and anything with the Liberty trademark or name attached. ■

1

2

3

"Have nothing... that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful"

4

1 EVENING PURSE
A tiny silver evening purse, made about 100 years ago, carries the number 925, which indicates British sterling silver. It measures 9cm by 6.5cm and opens to reveal leather and silk compartments. It is $350 at Just Browsing, Blenheim, (03) 577 5402.

2 HOT WATER JUG
This 28cm tall, hand-hammered copper hot water jug looks identical to those made in the early 1900s by Joseph Sankey & Sons in England, though this one does not have the JS & S mark on the bottom; $130 at Survivors Antiques in Pete's Pioneer Museum, Kerikeri, (09) 407 5518.

3 KAURI ARMCHAIR
A kauri armchair made around 1910 and newly upholstered in Warwick fabric is on sale at Lovejoys Antiques, Whangarei, for $430, (09) 437 7458.

4 OCCASIONAL TABLES
Plain, simple and functional, in the way of the Arts and Crafts Movement, these occasional tables date from the 1920s. The oak pedestal is 125cm high and is on sale for $350 at Kensington Collectables, Whangarei, (09) 437 0405. The cedar side table is 75cm high and is $375 at Home Comforts in Kaitaia, (09) 408 1150.

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Bound for glory

Master bookbinder Barbara Schmelzer has reached the highest level of her craft

STORY ANN PACKER / **PHOTOGRAPHS** PAUL McCREDIE

MORE THAN A century ago, Charles Dickens wrote that "there are books of which the fronts and backs are by far the best parts". Master bookbinder Barbara Schmelzer would agree. The German-born naturalised New Zealander has been refining her skills for the best part of 18 years, since arriving here in 1990 with her Kiwi husband.

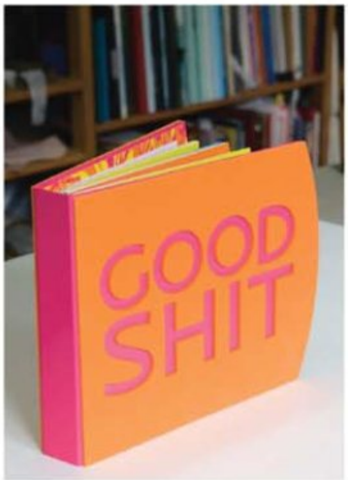
In 2007, she reached the highest level in her craft, creating a trio of masterpieces in a 72-hour practical examination in Munich, Germany – two hand-bound books, each with its own slip case, and an exquisitely boxed calligraphy set crafted to her own design, containing the finer tools of her trade.

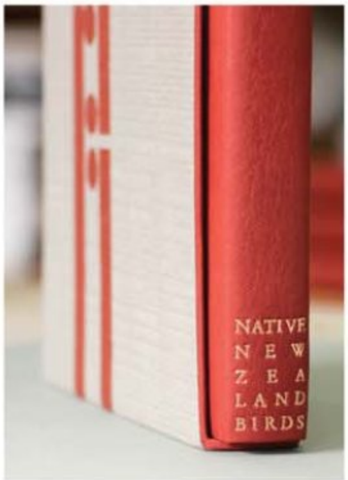
Barbara Schmelzer has quietly established herself as the country's best by hand-binding books for artists such as Bill Hammond, for whom she created 20 large, full-bound works containing etchings from the 1980s. The commission called for huge goatskins, specially prepared in Germany, to envelop the large art prints.

Last year's limited edition of *E Mervyn Taylor: Artist, Craftsman*, a biography by Bryan James, was half-bound, with vellum on the spine and corners only. >

FROM TOP LEFT: Artist books made from recycled shopping bags and wrapping paper. Barbara Schmelzer.

"I used to walk past an old bindery on my way to college. It had just





Working with leathers tanned to European bookbinding standards and cloths and papers imported from Germany, Barbara hand-tools titles in gold, silver or other coloured leaf. She also experiments with New Zealand fish skins, plastic, foam and wood. One of her bindings features blue gum wood covers and a crocodile spine; another, black plexiglas.

Barbara first came across what would become her life's obsession while at secretarial school in Bavaria. "I used to walk past an old bindery on my way to college. It had just been left empty and had intriguing tools and old books in the window. It was very dusty."

But it wasn't until she arrived in New Zealand, with her then husband Mark Crysell, that she was able to study elementary book crafts – and soon realised she would have to go back to Europe to learn fine bookbinding.

"There are no apprenticeships here any more," she says. "I still don't know anyone who takes trainees." She studied at the Bookbinding College in Stuttgart, Germany, followed by internships at the British Library and London's Victoria and Albert Museum. More recently, she has taught students in her own workshop and at Whitireia Polytechnic.

Moving house is not easy when you have a huge guillotine and a board chopper, each weighing hundreds of kilos and requiring heavy transport to move. Book presses, on the other hand, each require only two people to lift.

Barbara first set up shop at the tiny Newtown, Wellington cottage she shared with Mark, then on the upper floor of a cake-tin factory and finally in a 1905 bay villa in Kilbirnie. Mercifully, the villa was bone dry so there was never a problem with mould – especially important when people

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New Zealand's Sunday.

are bringing their paper treasures to you for restoration.

Barbara's bread and butter work – binding portfolios for graphic designers and photographers, repairing old books to international conservation standards and creating new albums from scratch – is alleviated with a little fun now and then. She has produced a series of little handmade books for holiday notes, crafted from the paper bags of businesses such as Pandoro, Unity Books and L'Affare Coffee and titled *Wellington* (or *Auckland* or *Sydney*) *in a Shopping Bag*.

But the master bookbinder's greatest satisfaction lies in binding and boxing portfolios for artist printmakers. A recent commission for Wellington art dealer Jenny Nelligan of Bowen Galleries involved crafting 28 boxes – each holding 15 prints – for the Melbourne Art Fair last year.

It's fitting, then, that Barbara herself should cross the Tasman to live for a while, to be closer to family. She has set up her workshop in Brookvale, Sydney and is enjoying Australian commissions, such as leather-bound stationery for a luxury super yacht. But requests for bookbinding work-shops, such as the one she held in Wellington in May, will continue to draw her back to this side of the Tasman.

You can see more online at www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz and www.barbaraschmelzer.com ■

FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Old brass type. An award-winning promotional folder. An examination piece bound in goatskin. Experimental bindings.

THIS PAGE, FROM TOP LEFT: *Ozymandias*, a limited-edition artist book, features photographs by Mark Crysell. A selection of leathers. Gold-tooling implements warm up on a gilding stove.

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Cancer Society

CS003

Green acre

Gardening guru Lynda Hallinan has created her own private Eden in central Auckland

STORY PRUE DASHFIELD / **PHOTOGRAPHS** MATTHEW WILLIAMS

THESE PAGES FROM LEFT: The collection of pottery on the living room window sill includes pieces by New Zealand artists Owen Bartlett and Tony Sly. Hydrangeas from Lynda's garden grace the dining table in science beaker-shaped vases.

"We're obsessed with having bigger homes but I'd rather have a bigger garden"

THIS PAGE, FROM ABOVE: Dick Frizzell's *Hot Buttered* (a scone recipe) hangs to the right of a large framed Et al work. The green kitchen wall is painted in Resene 'Clover'. Lynda Hallinan.

PORTRAIT: JANE USSHER

FOUR YEARS AGO, *NZ Gardener* editor Lynda Hallinan found a rumpty cottage with a collapsing wire fence and rudimentary carport within a stone's throw of the motorway. Bonuses included a stack of broken windows, 2.5 tonnes of old roof tiles, eight decrepit sinks and a plague of rats.

But her Auckland apartment's little courtyard was cramping her green fingers and here was a large, if feral, garden, chock-a-block with irresistible fruit trees. And at the bottom of the garden she discovered a 48sqm monument to the worst of DIY – a damp, stinking sleepout comprising living space, bedroom, a mud-filled shower that hovered between kitchen and bedroom and a very unsavoury loo.

The price was satisfactory – "nobody else really wanted it" – and on April Fools' Day 2005 Lynda and her cats took possession. The proud owner and her conscientious labour force – her retired parents – then set about making the sleepout fit to rent.

Its little deck was rotten and the floor holed and sloping. The windows dropped out when opened and, during the first week, Lynda's cats dispatched 14 rats.

Her builder/handyman father, retired farmer Jock Hallinan, began to wish they'd never started the three-and-a-half-month process that transformed the shack/sleepout into a loft-style apartment. >

In the sitting area, martini and champagne glasses are stacked to save space – with occasional catastrophic results; Lynda bought the sofa throw in Sweden.

THESE PAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: The butterfly jug is by Owen Bartlett. Clever storage in the bedroom. Peter Viesnik made the red and dark green glass paperweights. Alstroemeria in the bathroom. Lynda bought the letters to make the word jardin (French for garden) in Hawke's Bay.

"But once we had started," says Lynda, "we couldn't walk away."

Jock took up residence as soon as the bedroom, bathroom and shower were fit for use and Lynda's mum Marjorie joined him whenever she could tear herself away from the golf course. She tiled and plastered in her husband's wake as he repaired, reinforced or replaced everything but the exterior weatherboards and the flimsy rafters in the high-studded living space.

Those rafters are flimsy no longer. An architect recommended a robust central beam and Lynda's dad encased the others in MDF. He replaced the decramastic roof tiles with unpainted Zincalume, built new decks and painted the exterior in 'Baltic Sea' by Resene. When it was finished, his daughter liked it so much she rented out the cottage in front and moved in with the cats.

"I've got way too much stuff for it, but when have I lived in a proper house? We're obsessed with having bigger homes but I'd rather have a bigger garden. I don't spend much time indoors anyway."

And all that stuff declares its owner's character, interests and love of the colour green. The bedroom has a duvet cover embroidered with green flowers, a madonna lily print by London-based Kiwi botanical artist Bryan Poole and a photographic print of a butterfly – a birthday present from *NZ Gardener* photographer Sally Tagg. >

JARD

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Italian parsley, lettuce and golden thyme snuggle up with barley, bromeliads and cosmos on a shell path. A griselinia hedge lines the boardwalk built by Lynda's father, Jock. The apple tree growing through the deck is the source of Lynda's cider apples.

The living area has a row of green jugs and a nearly complete collection of Anchor Hocking's 1970s Fairfield range of glassware in green, assembled piece by piece from eBay – not without casualties. "I find something I really want and it gets here and it's busted." Recently, she bought a retro bean slicer on TradeMe. It's green.

The cats have got their claws into the white leather sofa that replaced the brown suede one ruined by an exploding bottle of home-made cider. The cider apples are, of course, from her garden.

In the absence of a fully formed kitchen, Lynda knocks up her meals on a barbecue, a microwave and a single hot plate. Her resolution to grow all her own food for the duration of 2007 attracted plenty of attention. This year's mission is to produce 1000 kilos of food from her Edenic garden, though Lynda says it's really too big for someone as busy as she.

The garden's meandering paths, four raised vegetable beds and pretty picket fence are her father's work; its astonishing variety of trees and plants is her own. Visitors to her open garden in December found the usual suspects in the vege patches: cabbages, tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, capsicums. They may have been familiar with the okra and the yard-long beans; they weren't so well acquainted with the mini black popcorn, the glade of Jerusalem artichokes, the coffee beans, the pawpaw, the loofahs or the barley destined for beer.

They recognised the fig, plum, apple, lemon, fig and avocado trees, and why would you plant nine olives unless you intended to make oil? But they needed help identifying the dwarf almonds, the weeping mulberry and the guava.

"I've got everything," says Lynda. You can't say fairer than that.

See more of this home at www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz ■

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Now, with new Olay Total Effects Touch of Foundation you don't have to choose between your **anti-ageing** moisturiser and a separate foundation – you can have both!

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New Olay Total Effects Touch of Foundation: Fight 7 signs of ageing AND improve the tone of your skin

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6. Gives firmer looking skin
7. Makes the skin more radiant and glowing

*Based on a US study among 125 Asians, Caucasians and Hispanics.

Our expert says:

Olay Total Effects' new Touch of Foundation is unlike any other tinted moisturiser or foundation, and the difference is that it has all the benefits of an anti-ageing cream, combined with luminous sheer coverage. I highly recommend Olay's Touch of Foundation for anyone that needs to cut down their time in front of the makeup mirror, but still wants to get great results! If there ever was a miracle product this is it!

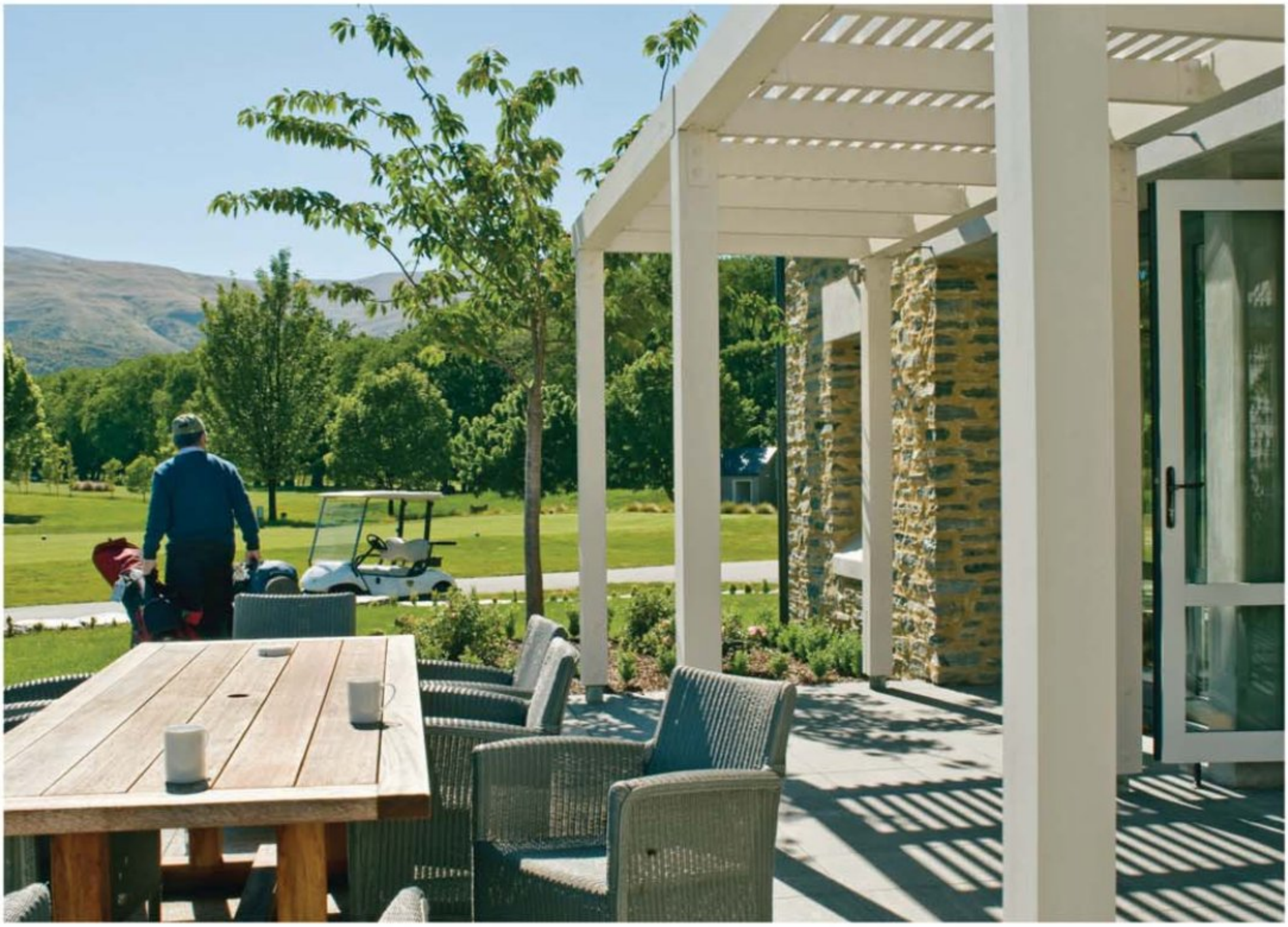
Nikki Lovrich is well known in New Zealand as a 'Celebrity Makeup artist'. She is one of the most established & experienced makeup artists working in New Zealand today, with over 20 years experience in the fashion, beauty & TV industry. New Olay Total Effects Touch of Foundation is now a staple product in her makeup kit.

8225H

Designed to a tee

A home on the range has become a stunning reality for the owners of Queenstown's Millbrook golf resort

STORY JENNY McLEOD / **PHOTOGRAPHS** SUELLEN BOAG



THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Eiichi Ishii. The chance to eat and entertain outdoors was a big drawcard for the Ishii family; here Eiichi sets off for a round of golf. A French sideboard blends well with a rough-hewn wall in the dining room.

PREVIOUS PAGES: Cherry blossom – a great favourite in Japan – enhances some pewter pieces. A fireplace constructed from Millbrook stone is a focal point in the New England-style lounge; the Wakatipu landscape is by Philip Beadle.

IT'S MORE THAN 20 years since the Japanese-based Ishii family became shareholders in the five-star Millbrook golf and lifestyle resort close to Queenstown. But they've only recently built their own home there – a home that is the antithesis of their inner-city Tokyo apartment.

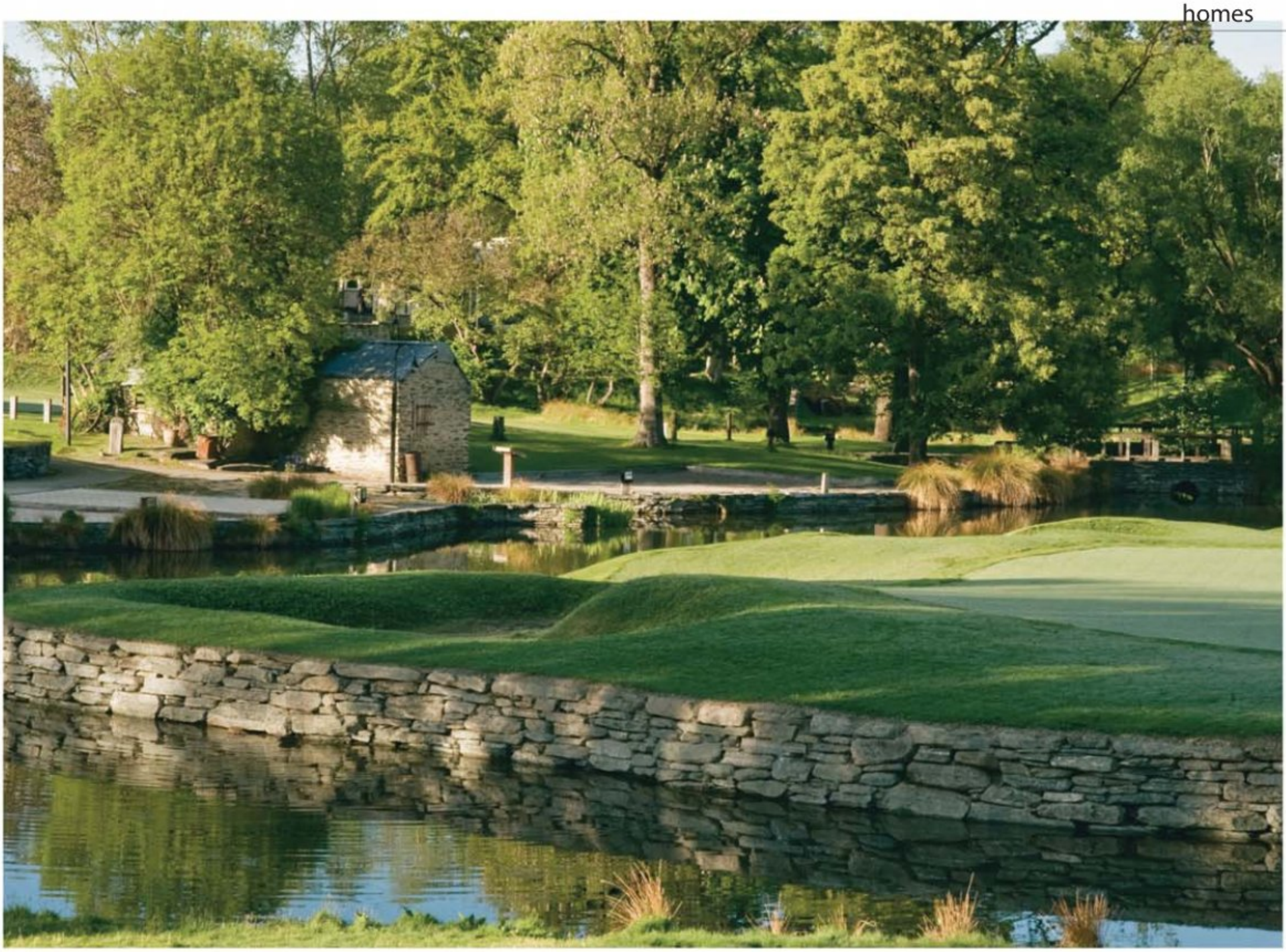
Eiichi Ishii, who is chairman of the Millbrook board of directors, and his wife Hiroko have visited Millbrook around five times a year since becoming investors in 1987. At first the family stayed in one of the resort's villa apartments but, as passionate golfers, they dreamed of having a home right alongside the golf course.

"Mrs Ishii always wanted to build next to the 10th fairway after seeing [former] President Eisenhower's house on the 10th hole during a Masters tournament at Augusta. There was an opportunity to make that happen at Millbrook," says Eiichi.

And so the Streamside development – six spectacular homes alongside the 10th fairway – was initiated with the Ishiis' house as the cornerstone, adjacent to the tee box. Queenstown architect Michael Wyatt, who has had a long association with Millbrook, was commissioned to design the six houses as a "harmonious group". >

Ingrid Geldof Design of Christchurch designed the contemporary kitchen; a Regency-style dining table and Hepplewhite-style chairs were made for the Ishiis by Sefton Powrie in Auckland.

"It has quite an American influence because Mrs Ishii particularly liked the New England style"



The Ishiis were Michael's only clients when the development began as the other five homes were sold off the plan and modified as they were built.

"The idea was that the houses would be sufficiently varied but remain common in their make-up so they worked well as a group," Michael explains. "We were able to tweak the others to suit the individual owners. We also had the luxury with this development of spacing the homes further apart, allowing room for planting and more privacy between the sites."

The Ishiis' house has been placed on the site at a 45-degree angle, so that the living room overlooks the golf course one way and a picturesque stream with resort facilities in the background on the other. French doors open wide on to a patio with panoramic rural and alpine views backdropped by the Remarkables mountain range. Peaked roof forms set at different angles and skylights are among the more distinctive architectural details.

Like the rest of the Millbrook development, the Ishiis' contemporary, two-storey, three-bedroom home is inspired by early Central Otago architecture and features the traditional combination of stone, weatherboard, plaster and slate-tile roofing.

Stone collected from Millbrook's own quarry has been used for both the central fireplace and the outside of the home, linking interior and exterior. It also maintains a visual link with some of the restored original stone farm buildings, including a millhouse, blacksmith's shop and stables, that are a focal point of the resort.

The spacious outdoor living area has a cottage-style garden, planted with lavender, irises and roses and ringed with stone walls, with a stunning outlook to the Remarkables and Wakatipu Basin's Brow Peak. For the Ishiis and their daughter Yuki, who lives in London and visits every summer, the chance to eat and entertain outdoors in this magnificent setting is a significant part of living at Millbrook.

"We are very happy with the property and our Millbrook place," says Eiichi. "We have a city life in Tokyo and a Hawaiian-style house in Honolulu and this home fits in very well with the Millbrook setting. It is very peaceful and we love the clean air, clean water and beautiful scenery." >

THIS PAGE: Millbrook's Old Smithy – an original stone farm building – can be seen from the Ishii home, across the recently built "island green".
FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The lounge opens on to a patio with superb rural views. A view of the 10th and 12th fairways from the master bedroom. Glass mosaic tiles, white Elba marble and innovative lighting are features of the Ishiis' private bathroom.

FROM TOP: The Remarkables and Millbrook's villas seen across the ninth green. A cottage garden surrounds the Ishiis' Michael Wyatt-designed home. Hiroko Ishii tees off at the 10th, outside her front door.

They also love the rural ambience, particularly the ducks, ducklings and herons that frequent the streams and ponds around Millbrook.

Queenstown designer Jewell Cassells designed the interior of the house, working closely with Hiroko, who provided photographs of the style of furnishings and furniture she wanted. The system worked well and the Ishiis are delighted with the look, which features white walls throughout, offset by natural earthy colours in the living areas and a black and white kitchen. There is a mix of old and new New Zealand-sourced furniture and Hiroko's passion for the work of local artists is evident throughout.

"The home has a feeling of both comfort and luxury," says Jewell. "It has quite an American influence because Mrs Ishii particularly liked the New England style. I guess it's really a New Zealand version of a New England house in the mountains."

The library, which doubles as a mah-jong room, is the only obvious Japanese reference in the house and is a favourite with the Ishiis and their house guests.

"We select friends to come on a trip with us if they play golf and mah-jong," says Eiichi with a laugh. "Sometimes both Mrs Ishii and I want to book the mah-jong room at the same time. It's very popular."

The Ishiis' son Gota is Millbrook's managing director and they've made many country club friends over the years through their interest in golf.

"We have lots of friends here and we have introduced quite a few of our friends from Japan to Millbrook," says Eiichi. "I am very proud of Millbrook. This is our second home and we love it. I think in the future we will spend three or four months here every year." ■

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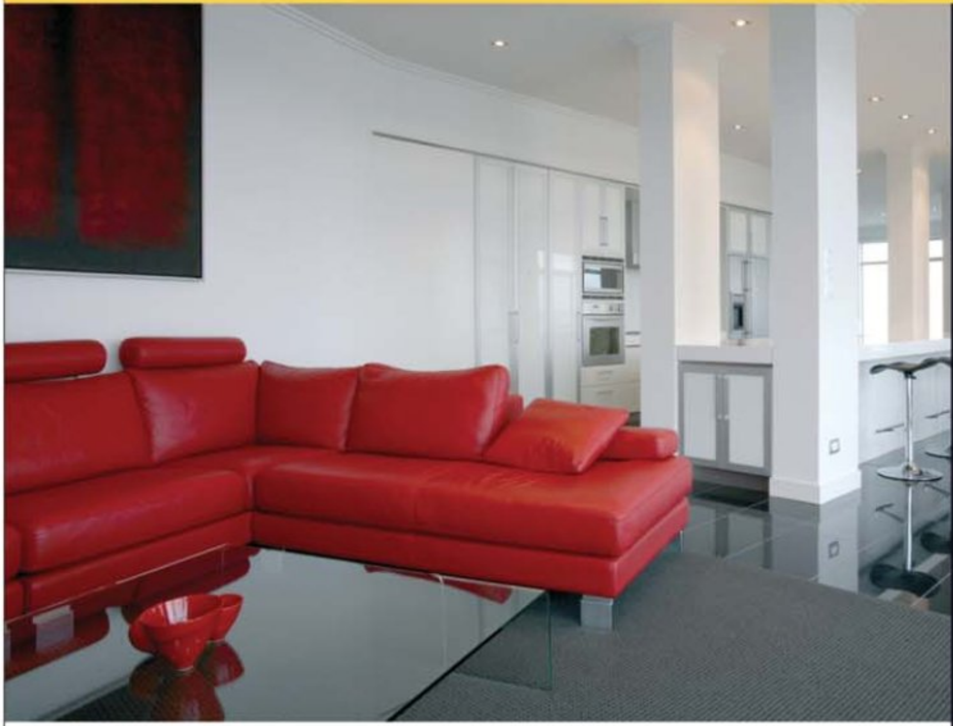

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THESE PAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: An ornate chandelier and a nude by Brett Taylor make strong statements in the dining area. A Mexican mirror with a hand-carved frame enlarges the living room. The eclectic hallway art collection includes a Wanganui beach scene by Don Hill (bottom). Rick and Colleen in the garden. A metal peacock and peahen rule the deck. Garden seating.

Love at second sight

A Rotorua couple has discovered that small can be bountifully beautiful

STORY DENISE IRVINE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** NICOLA TOPPING

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Colleen and Rick. The tree-lined driveway is visible through the kitchen window. Rick's desk fits snugly into the bedroom alcove. The spacious west-facing deck. A comfy wing chair in the living room extension is perfect for reading.

COLLEEN WONG AND her partner Rick Thame don't normally do things by halves, yet their Rotorua unit is probably less than half the size of the houses they've previously owned. Living here has been a lesson in how to make clever use of a simple structure and turn a 114sqm two-bedroom 1970s property into a thing of beauty.

It's also been a lesson in how to pare back possessions. "How many sheets and towels do you actually need?" asks Colleen as she opens her compact linen cupboard where three or four sets of good towels and an extra set of sheets for each bedroom are neatly stowed.

"We've got things on long-term loan all over the country," jokes Rick.

Tucked down a private, tree-lined drive off one of Rotorua's central arteries, Colleen and Rick's home is adjoined by an identical unit, though it's not painted, planted and decorated in the same style. Step inside their front door, however, and you get the full effect of their vision and hard work.

The pair saw the unit just over two years ago, after selling their previous home. They were renting and thinking about building a new house when Rick had a health scare. The unit came on the market and, within two days of visiting it, they'd made an offer. Six weeks later it was totally refurbished, they moved in, and really fell in love with it. They'd been thinking of it as a temporary home while Rick recovered but now they say they'd be hard to budge.

Colleen laughs as she thinks back to that swift decision. The unit was tired, the decor still anchored in the 70s, but it had an excellent location, a workable structure with a central hallway feeding the two bedrooms, bathroom and living area, and a peaceful garden on the western side.

A strong selling point was the generous master bedroom with an extended sunny-afternoon seating alcove that makes the room beautifully spacious. The open-plan living room is also generous – nine metres by five – with the kitchen at the eastern end

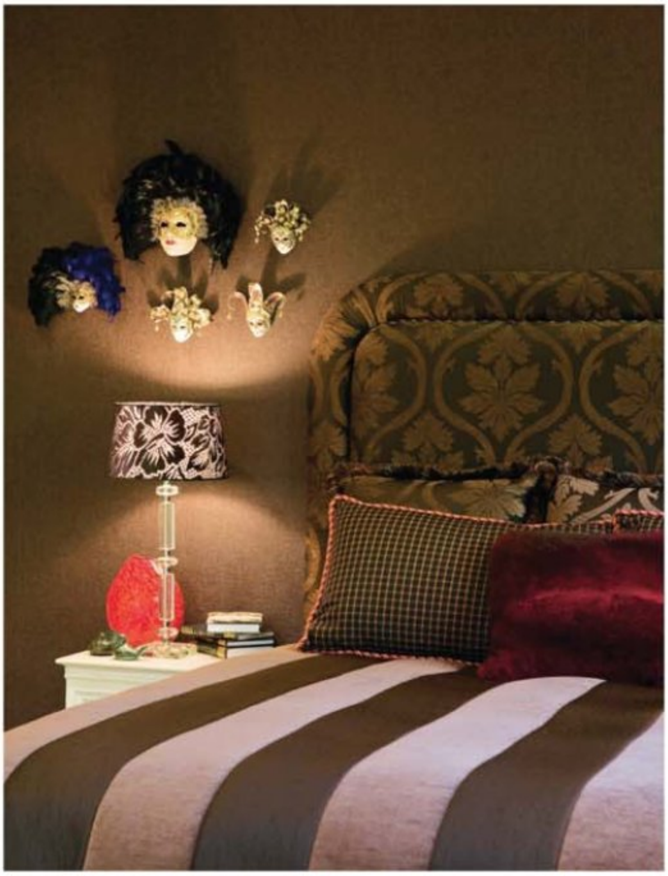
"This home is the combined effort of a lot of people's talent"

to catch the morning sun. Like the main bedroom, the living room also has an extension – a stepped-down former porch that's now enclosed.

Colleen and Rick saw the potential and consulted their friend Peter Reynolds, a Rotorua-based interior designer. Colleen assists Peter in his gallery in Eruera Street, and she has the utmost confidence in his work. When Peter gave the unit his vote of approval, they embarked on the refit, with his design input.

Today Colleen describes her home, glowing with colour, art and carefully chosen furnishings, as "the combined effort of a lot of people's talent". On the day they took possession she had a team of contractors ready to go and within six weeks the basics of lighting, painting, papering and carpeting were done.

The only major structural change was in the kitchen. It was gutted and enlarged with space cribbed from the adjoining laundry, which is now parked in a cupboard. >



FROM LEFT: The master bedroom is decorated in sumptuous chocolate with red and gold highlights; a collection of Venetian papier mâché masks on the wall is dramatically lit. The oil painting in the bedroom alcove is by Auckland-based South African artist Dalene Meiring.

A picture window in the master bedroom was replaced with glass sliders opening to a deck they have built across the western wall of the house.

Colleen and Rick chose a functional modular kitchen with laminated benches, rather than granite and custom-built cabinetry, and a soft blue second-hand carpet in excellent condition was laid throughout. Such decisions contributed to their coming in just $30 over the modest budget they'd set for the basic refit.

Colleen says she'd rather spend money on beautiful fabrics, lamps, cushions or paintings – things that add lustre and charm. So, with Peter's guidance, she and Rick mixed new additions with objects they already owned.

In the spacious living area, Persian rugs mark out the various spaces of dining area, sitting area and conservatory in the former front porch. The carpet becomes a simple background for the rugs' rich colours, complemented by walls papered in deep buttermilk and terracotta and a sparkling glass and metal chandelier that hangs over the dining table.

The room's vibrant colours were chosen to work with two tub chairs upholstered in textured, earthy-toned stripes. Colleen and Rick had had them recovered not long before they bought the unit and didn't want to part with them. The chairs have since been joined by a sumptuous new couch piled with velvet and possum fur cushions.

Clever placement of mirrors further enlarges the room and offers glimpses of the outdoor planting. A huge, back-view nude in warm flesh tones by Pikowai artist Brett Taylor takes the eye immediately, as does a view of Lake Tekapo by Sally Maguire, a dramatic oil by Auckland-based Yugoslav artist Vjekoslav Nemesh, called *Flying Dutchman and Purple Horse*, and a watercolour of the Karori hills by Australian painter Ada Clark.

Colleen and Rick particularly cherish their paintings and their Persian rugs; if they ever had to choose what precious things to save in a fire, they reckon they'd be lugging those out of the house first.

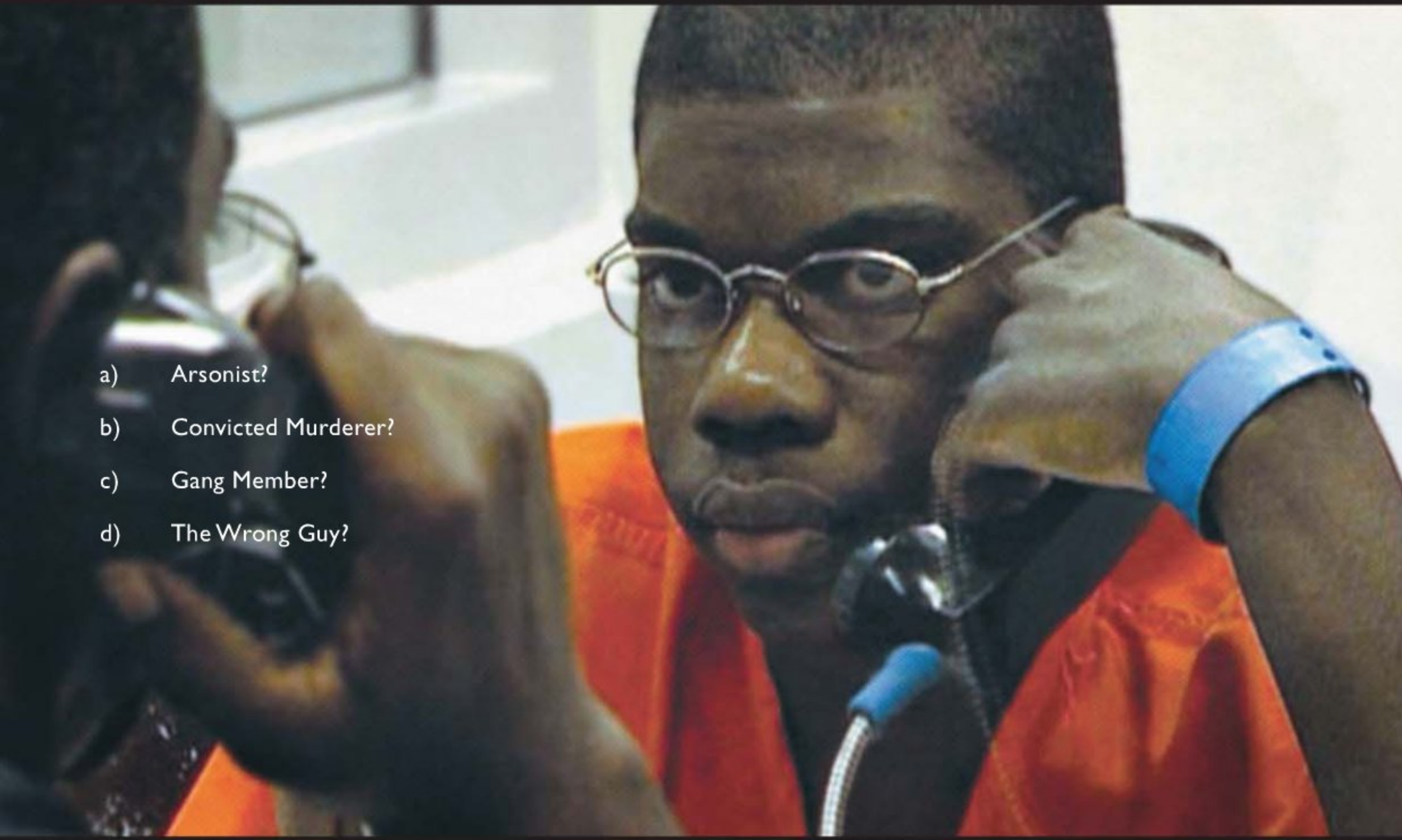
There are more rugs and paintings in the master bedroom with its deep chocolate wallpaper and padded bed headboard in textured chocolate fabric. Highlights of gold, red and animal print have been added through the art, curtaining and cushions. Like the living room, the bedroom opens to the private deck.

When Colleen and Rick first moved in, their spacious bedroom doubled as an office for their financial services business. But the lack of separation between home and work became an issue and a relocatable office was moved on to the section. It has served them well ever since.

The bathroom and toilet (complete with chandelier) have had tasteful makeovers and the guest room, which has accommodated many of their friends and family in the past two years, has been spiced up with a luscious painting of tamarillos by Colleen's cousin May Williams.

"There's always a bed here for someone," says Colleen. "That's one of the ways you make the place a home." As she introduces cats Harry and Katie, slumbering peacefully on the furniture, she quotes one of Peter's favourite sayings: "Houses are built to be lived in; things are designed to be used."

See more at www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz



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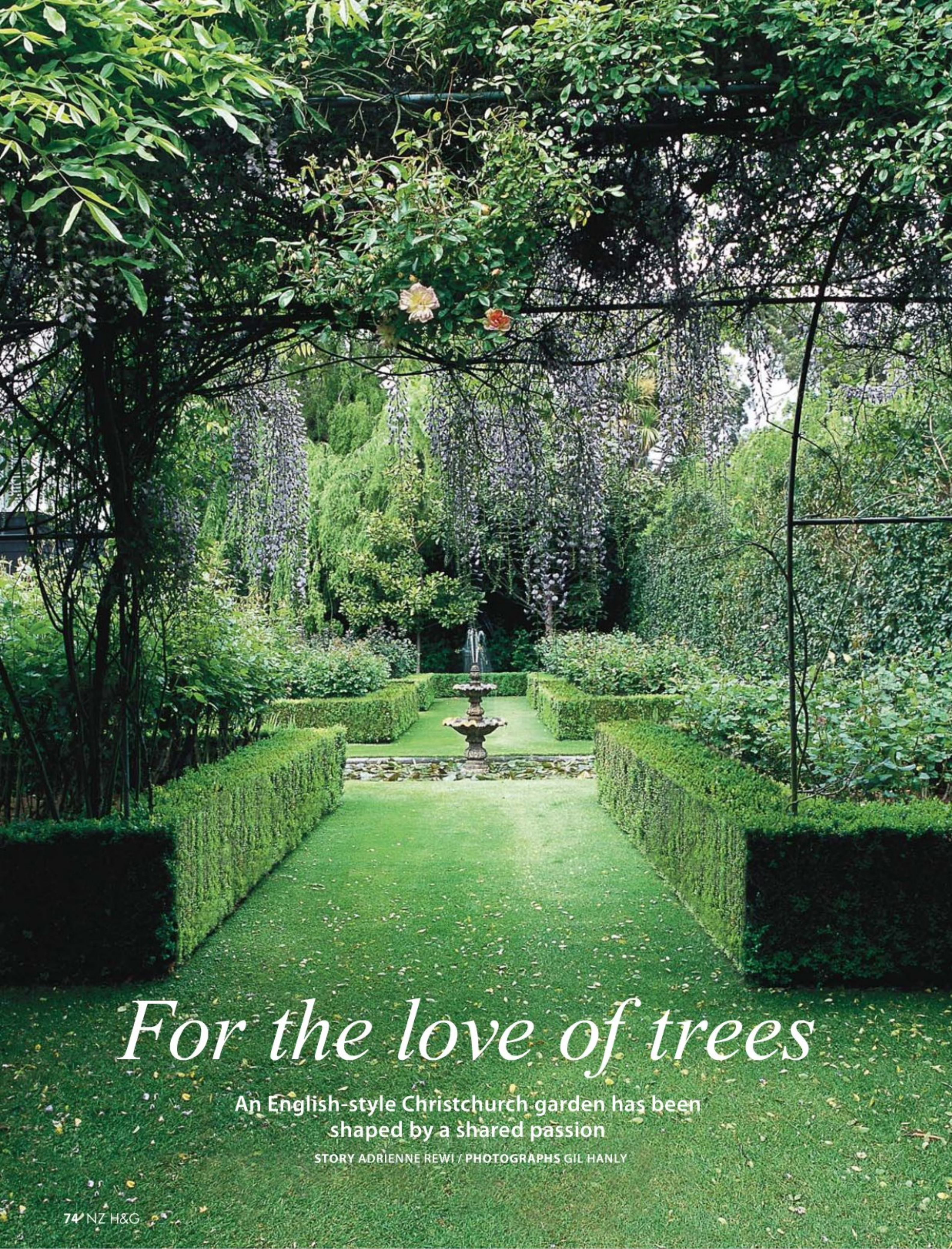


For the love of trees

An English-style Christchurch garden has been shaped by a shared passion

STORY ADRIENNE REWI / **PHOTOGRAPHS** GIL HANLY

Louise Dench loves the element of surprise that hedges can bring to a garden. At The Willows, the Halswell garden she shares with her husband Geoff on the outskirts of Christchurch, she has indulged her passion for their leafy architecture.

From the hefty bulk of the huge, original macrocarpa farm hedge to her pruned buxus, English yew, lonicera, escallonia, teucrium, pittosporum and hornbeam, her hedges frame a series of visual treats that reinforce her gardening philosophy.

"I like the idea of hedges enclosing secrets and the feeling that they are going to take you somewhere," says Louise. "They take a lot of work to maintain and I clip most of them by hand myself. I find the art of keeping them all straight and neat very satisfying."

The hedges are also part of Louise's childhood dream of living in a stone house surrounded by an English-style garden with formal hedges.

"My sister and I grew up in Southland and we were big Enid Blyton fans. We wrote away to join her Famous Five club and, with three friends, we'd have meetings in each other's macrocarpa hedges, where we'd plan our own adventures."

The Willows is named after the three 100-year-old willow trees that dominated the property when Geoff and Louise bought it 25 years ago. >

THESE PAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: In season, the creamy blooms of the *Magnolia grandiflora* droop over the dining room windows. A view of the formal English-style front garden. Louise and Geoff Dench. Garden seats are tucked into leafy corners. A mix of topiaried buxus and perennials across the front of the house
PREVIOUS PAGES: Flowering wisteria frames the long view into the formal rose garden. The lily pond with its ornate fountain.

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPH: GUY FREDERICK

"We've been constantly amazed at how well and how fast everything has grown"

One willow still remains – looming large over the home the Denches built, which is every bit as English in character as Louise had hoped. The Welsh slate roof tiles were shipped to Christchurch from England in 1914 and the huge front doors were made from recycled beams from the old Christchurch Hospital. It is a handsome dwelling that sits solidly in the English-style garden planned by Christchurch landscape designer Ben McMaster.

"I'd had very little gardening experience when we came here, so when I saw Ben's work I was very excited," she says. "I loved his English style. I told him I wanted something romantic with a perennial border, a knot garden, a tennis court, room for my two favourites – lavender and roses – and a rambling path around the whole garden. He came up with a plan that we've loved ever since. We've been constantly amazed at how well and how fast everything has grown – which is half the pleasure of a garden of course."

Geoff and Louise share a love of trees. The front lawn alone is punctuated by 16 beautiful deciduous specimens; lines of pin oaks border the driveway and the rear tennis court is tucked in behind stands of ginkgo, mop-top robinias, liquidambars and golden ash. Every autumn the property glows as the claret ashes turn blackcurrant red, the elms are smudged with soft golden green and the ash trees spread out their umbrellas of yellow, orange and brown.

"Autumn is one of my favourite times: the garden changes its clothing ready for winter. And then everything bursts into life in November – fresh, pristine, pure. That's the most beautiful time of all," says Louise.

Geoff, who owns his own forklift hire company, has developed an extensive glade of native trees at the rear of the house, underplanted with his collection of native ferns. Their lacy fronds entwine with lush epiphytes and broadleaf trees to make The Willows a garden of two parts: the formal English-style front garden with its perennial border and six formal rose beds enclosed in buxus hedges and, in total contrast, the free woodland planting that roams down the west side of the tennis court.

It is a garden that has served the Dench family well. Geoff and Louise's four sons, Hayden, 27, Brook, 25, Oliver, 23, and William, 21, have grown up here – mowing lawns, raking leaves, pulling weeds. They've all left home except William, who still helps by trimming edges. The Willows has also been the perfect setting for an annual tennis tournament complete with an eagerly fought-for cup. >

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPH: GUY FREDERICK

THIS PAGE: An avenue of pin oaks leads visitors to the front door. Sixteen deciduous trees on the front lawn make a colourful statement in autumn.
FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM LEFT: Louise finds clipping hedges a surprisingly satisfying activity. She spends at least two hours a day in the garden – more in summer. Terracotta pots by the old garden shed. The intricate knot garden is one of Louise's favourite garden features.

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Paeonies add a burst of colour to the perennial border. A giant chess set is tucked into a sunny corner behind the tennis court. An Allan Coleman garden sculpture, *Victorian Lady,* made from chicken wire adds a touch of whimsy. A stone wall marks the approach to The Willows.

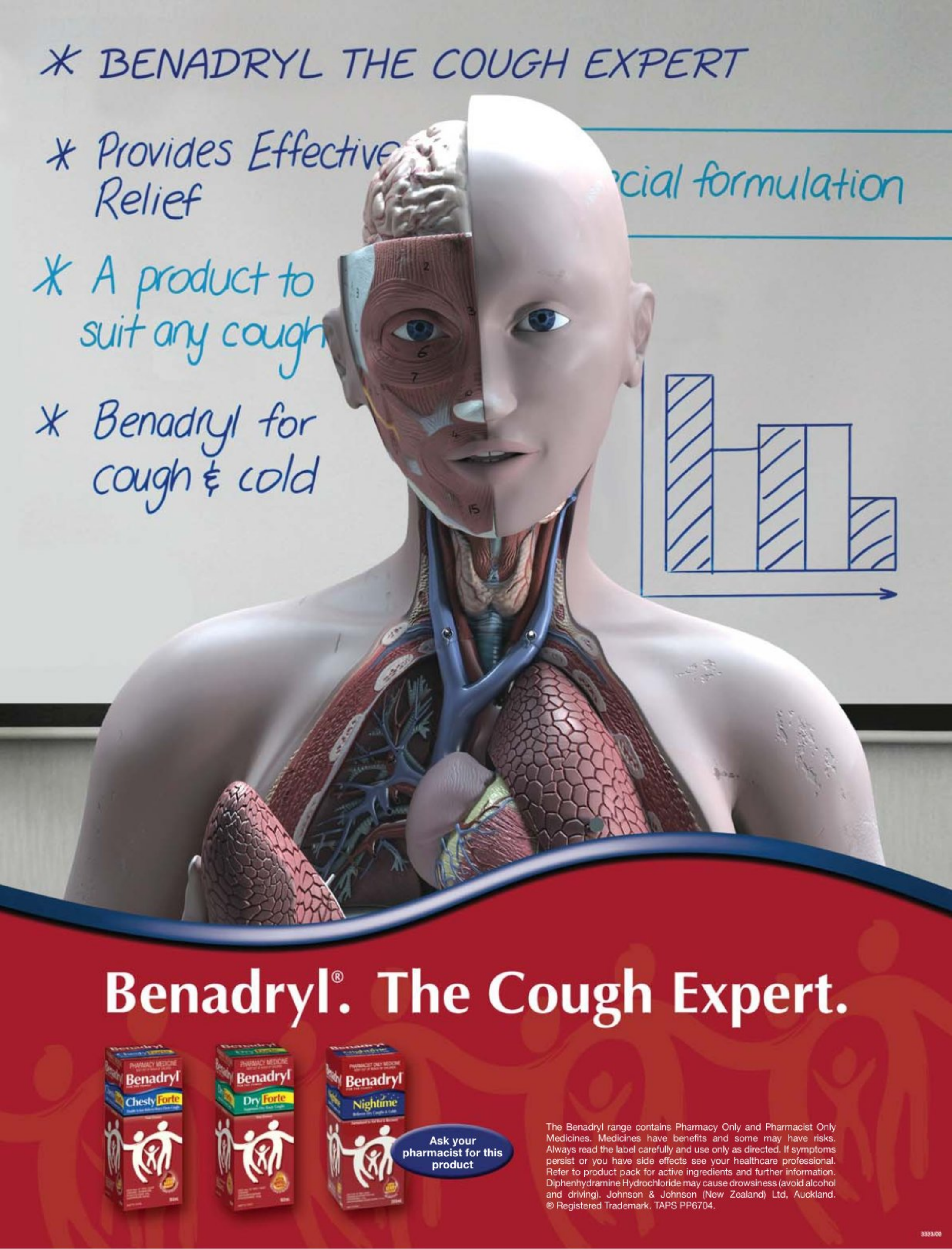
Another fun games day sees up to 70 of the Denches' friends gather to compete in rounds of pétanque, lawn bowls, tennis, four-square, chess and darts.

"The garden is central to our lifestyle," says Louise. "If we're not working in it, we're resting or playing in it. We spend a lot of time relaxing and enjoying meals on the front verandah overlooking the rose garden. And there isn't a day goes by that one of us is not doing something in the garden. I spend about two hours a day pottering about – more in the summer. I've even been known to slip out in my pyjamas first thing in the morning for a few hours. It's one of the nicest times of the day."

Louise used to believe that if you develop a garden you should maintain it yourself without help – but lately she's softened her approach. "I was almost embarrassed to have help recently but I'm realising that, if you want a life beyond the garden, you do need someone to come in. We get help once a year to trim the rose garden hedges, the weeping pears and the hornbeam hedge along the front of the property."

The couple gets an enormous amount of pleasure from the garden but both say they want time for other interests. "I host garden visits, I play tennis, I sew for myself and others and I learn French," says Louise. "Geoff is a passionate fisherman and we're building a bach at Little Akaloa on Banks Peninsula. We're both looking forward to spending more time there when it's completed. That won't have a garden. The bach will be a place where we rest." ■

For more see www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz



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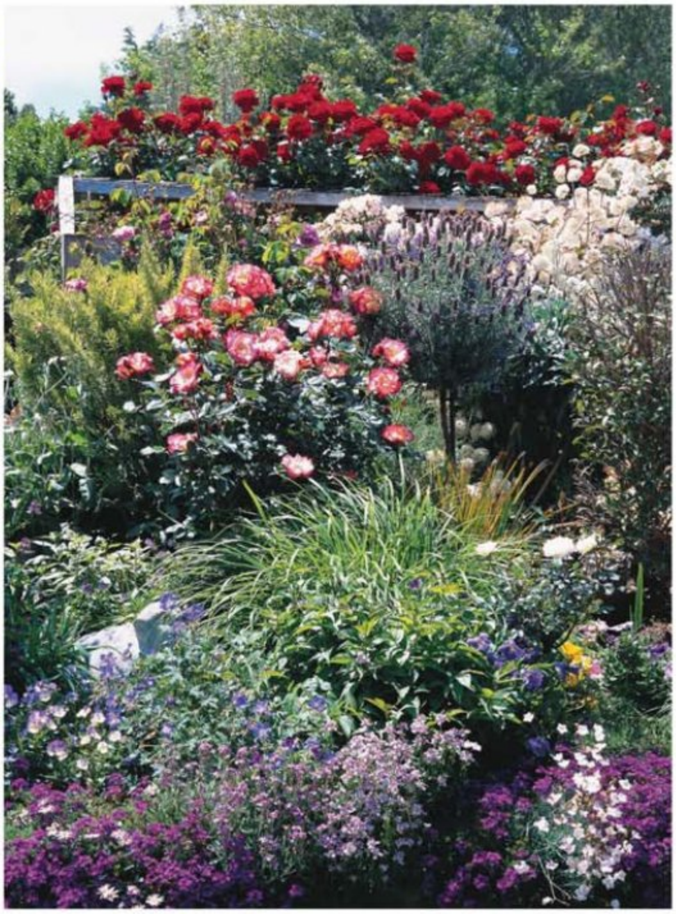

Space saver

Mary Dickson's compact Hawera garden is packed to the brim with star performers

STORY JANE HURLEY / **PHOTOGRAPHS** JANE DOVE JUNEAU

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A cascade of white wisteria. 'Dublin Bay' roses atop an archway with 'Betty Boop' below. The gazania 'Cleopatra' in front of white osteospermum. Aquilegias and the miniature rose 'Chameleon'. Lobelias with pansy seedlings.

THIS PAGE: The maple 'Shindeshojo' glows in the background as the roses 'Crepuscule' and 'Buff Beauty' froth along the fence line. Mary Dickson carrying an annual viola.

LITTLE THINGS MEAN A LOT to Hawera gardener Mary Dickson. She hovers affectionately over a tiny nemesia, mourns the loss of a saxifrage over a hot summer – "I would never have thought it would die" – and shows me where a patch of minute cyclamens is due to pop up.

"I've got lots of little treasures – all the lovely little primulas and violas here," she says. Beside her modern brick house float aquilegias and mignonette and the flowerbeds are sprigged with dianthus and primroses. It's a smart, urban garden with an old-fashioned twist.

For Mary perfection comes in perennial-sized packages. "When they come out in flower in the spring, it's just so fresh and colourful." Mary fell in love with gardening the way, she says, most countrywomen do. "I married a farmer and got stuck away out in the wop-wops!"

After joining the Women's Division of Federated Farmers in 1958, Mary discovered that everybody swapped plants. "You always ended up taking cuttings or little plants home. You didn't have the faintest idea what they were." One day some of the district's most enthusiastic gardeners turned up with a whole truckload of cuttings for her, she says. "Of course I had to plant them."

Forty years later, Mary and her husband, Ian, began to plan building their retirement house on a piece of land much closer to town. Sadly, Ian died before their dream was realised and she found herself buying a new townhouse on a raw, razed section, alone. Undaunted, she brought with her all her favourite plants from the farm as well as a trailer-load of broken concrete.

"We'd kept it from old cowsheds and things over the years. So I carted it all up here and set to work." Using the salvaged concrete and mounds of bulldozed earth she'd asked the builders to leave onsite, Mary landscaped her new garden, shaping contours and building walls. >

"I'm a plant collector. It's an obsession"

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The climbing rose 'Crepuscule' shades the archway above the golden rose 'Freesia' and the osteospermum 'Terracotta'. Mary's husband Ian built the seat now in "the hosta corner". Pots provide colour by the house, with 'Compassion' on the arch in the background. The azalea 'Dreadnought' and golden alyssum. Clematis 'Dr Rupple'.

A copper water mister keeps Mary's perennials (saxifrage, violas and corydalis) looking fresh, with a busy bird house and the dramatic counterpoint of the cordyline 'Red Fountain'.

"I hammered away here for hours at night and kept everybody awake around the place, so I'm told," she says.

The hardest thing about moving from a huge farm garden to a small urban patch was restraining herself. "I'm a plant collector. It's an obsession." There was also the challenge of "having colour for most of the year. I suppose that's why I have quite a few pots and hanging baskets."

But Mary has always had a few clever solutions up her sleeve, the first of which was to plant miniature varieties. "I do love these little dwarf camellias, the 'Paradise' ones and sweet 'Emily-Kate'. And I've got 'Fairy Wand', which is a melony colour. When you've got a small garden, you've got to look for the smaller shrubs."

Then there's that element of drama. If you're not careful it can go missing in a smaller plot, she says. Mary points to a diaphanous planting of pastels – soft pinks, whites, blues and violets – massed around a jagged crimson cordyline in a pot. "When you look out there and you see that cordyline 'Red Fountain' – well, it would look boring without that somehow."

Add impact by mixing and matching, says Mary. She's grown the deep orangey-gold blooms of 'Crepuscule', a lovely old-fashioned climbing rose, next to the duller gold of 'Buff Beauty', "because 'Crepuscule' is just fabulous but 'Buff Beauty' has more perfume". She grows her beloved hybrid clematises over everything – even mixing two climbers. "They get pretty well hacked back. And the hybrid clematises really don't do anything bad climbing over things."

Finally, Mary advises, pick multitaskers and star performers. Where space is limited, plants have to earn their place. "Don't be afraid to get rid of things that don't do well."

She has some favourites that make the grade. "I enjoy growing cornuses because they have such nice foliage and their colours change during the year." Maples add just as much. And she loves magnolias, particularly a new deep wine variety called 'Genie', which is just right for the smaller garden.

There's another reason why 'Genie' is close to her heart: it was developed by her son-in-law, horticulturist Vance Hooper. Not that she's biased, of course. When it comes to roses, 'Mutabilis', the lovely multi-coloured 'Butterfly Rose' and 'Cardinal Hume' get special mention for hardly ever being without flowers, as does 'Betty Boop' for its lovely bronzy foliage.

But the star of her garden during the annual Taranaki Garden Festival is her flowering crab apple (*Malus ioensis* 'Plena'). "It's like an apple blossom – white with soft pink – and its growth is very twisted," says Mary. "Everybody just raves over it."

Mary's garden is a NZ Gardens Trust Garden of Significance.

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Salad days

It's flora downstairs and food above in this compact and clever Parnell patch **STORY** SHELLEY BRIDGEMAN / **PHOTOGRAPHS** SALLY TAGG

THESE PAGES, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Wendy Hanning. Strawberries flourish on the sheltered deck. Wendy bought the yacht motif plates from Auckland's Sails restaurant. The crab apple tree and a port wine magnolia frame the view out to Hobson Bay. Freshly picked cucumbers, cherry tomatoes and beans. Basil, parsley and mint grow in pots in front of a cucumber plant; lettuces thrive in their elevated planter box.

THIS PAGE: Frazer waters his vegetable garden as Wendy looks on. Climbing beans. The tongue-in-cheek sign was a gift to Frazer from one of his grandchildren. White impatiens are a recurring theme in Wendy's courtyard garden.

WENDY HANNING LIKES to plant flowers while her husband Frazer prefers growing vegetables. At first glance, their modest Auckland garden would seem unable to accommodate these two pursuits comfortably. The tiled entrance courtyard, well shaded by a market umbrella and a clipped liquidambar tree, is fringed with a profusion of impatiens, lobelia and clivia. Wendy's preference, it would appear, has triumphed over that of her husband.

But appearances can be deceptive. Step inside the house, ascend the white carpeted stairs, walk through the master bedroom and out on to a narrow, sunny deck – and prepare to be amazed at what has been achieved in an outdoor area that measures a mere three metres wide by 14 metres long. Frazer has created a lush and substantial vegetable garden in nothing more than a series of window boxes and the occasional terracotta pot.

The Hannings installed the window boxes 21 years ago. "The first year I was allowed flowers," says Wendy. But then Frazer declared the floral displays a waste of space. "Flowers don't achieve anything. You can't eat them," he said. "Except for nasturtiums," she quipped, before he colonised the planters for his vegetables. His output reads like a garden centre catalogue: beetroot, capsicums, courgettes, cauliflowers, carrots, cucumbers, radishes, rhubarb, rocket and scarlet runner beans – and plenty more.

Frazer is quietly tickled that he was about 20 years ahead of the current trend for growing your own produce. He thinks our convenience-driven society could do with becoming more self-sufficient and that there's really no excuse not to make a bit of an effort with a vegetable plot of one's own.

"It's amazing what you can grow in a bucket," adds Wendy.

Temperatures often reach the 30s on this sheltered deck with its elevated outlook across Hobson Bay; the boards regularly get too hot to walk on in bare feet. These virtual hothouse conditions seem to suit tomatoes in particular. At the height of summer, four different varieties, including cherry and beefsteak, climb as high as the roof and deliver oversized, plump fruit, which Wendy freezes for use in Italian-inspired pasta sauces.

An occasional caterer for corporate functions, Wendy can recognise fine raw ingredients when she sees them. "We harvest kilos and kilos each season. Nothing goes to waste."

Frazer waters his plants every day, regularly renews the soil and keeps pesticide spraying to a minimum. He has planted marigolds with the tomatoes but reckons it doesn't deter the whitefly as it's said to. The bird-scarer shaped like a cat's face hasn't really worked either. "The birds love it," he observes with a laugh.

"Crops all finish at different times so it's hard to keep it looking nice the whole time," he says. It was Frazer's grandfather who instructed him in the virtues of growing vegetables "way back" and now it's Frazer's turn to pass on his knowledge to the next generation. Grand-daughter Emma, 12, already has a green thumb – and, says Frazer, a particular knack for growing herbs and tomatoes.

ABOVE: Tomatoes underplanted with marigolds grow on the left and dwarf beans on the right.

For Frazer, gardening offers refreshing and contemplative time out from his career as a printing industry contractor.

"While I'm watering the garden I think about everything. I find it really peaceful and relaxing," he says. "And the plants don't answer you back."

He doesn't go so far as to talk to his plants but he has been known to verbally abuse the occasional caterpillar.

So far, only parsnips have eluded Frazer's green grasp; the 20cm depth of the window boxes has stymied his attempts to grow them. However, he recently discovered a dwarf variety: with any luck, the couple will soon be enjoying them roasted – a favoured delicacy in this house.

One of the first jobs the Hannings did when they bought this property in 1986 was to extend the courtyard's paved area to make it more conducive to entertaining and today it's a cool and serene extension of their indoor living spaces. Last year, more than 60 guests gathered here beneath a mini marquee to help celebrate Frazer's 70th birthday.

The dense blue and white planting in the borders was designed to minimise the maintenance required. White mandevilla trails up the pitched roofline and camellias and gardenias flourish in pots.

Although this is a true his-and-hers garden, there is a significant degree of collaboration. Frazer painstakingly crafted the edging for Wendy's flower beds from lengths of Australian gum and she's unable to resist "titivating" his vegetable deck – a process that involves picking up stray leaves and rifling through the strawberry plants. "Even though it's a small garden," Wendy says, "it's never-ending. There's always something to do." ■

Before you criticise someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticise them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes. ” Borrow money from a pessimist. They don't expect it back. ” Give a man a fish and he will eat for a day. Teach him how to fish and he will sit in a boat all day drinking beer. ” I am not a vegetarian because I love animals. I'm a vegetarian because I hate plants. ” I used to be indecisive, now I'm not so sure. ” If at first you don't succeed, skydiving is definitely not for you. ” A diplomat is someone who can tell you to go to hell in such a way that you will look forward to the trip. ” If you think nobody cares that you're alive, try missing a couple of phone payments. ” Laughing stock: cattle with a sense of humour. ” Shin: a device for finding furniture in the dark. ” Why is abbreviated such a long word? ” Why isn't phonetic spelled the way it sounds? ” Two antennas get married. The ceremony was pretty dull but the reception was excellent. ” What's orange and sounds like a parrot? A carrot. ”

Feel free to laugh with TENA

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PRETTY PICTURE

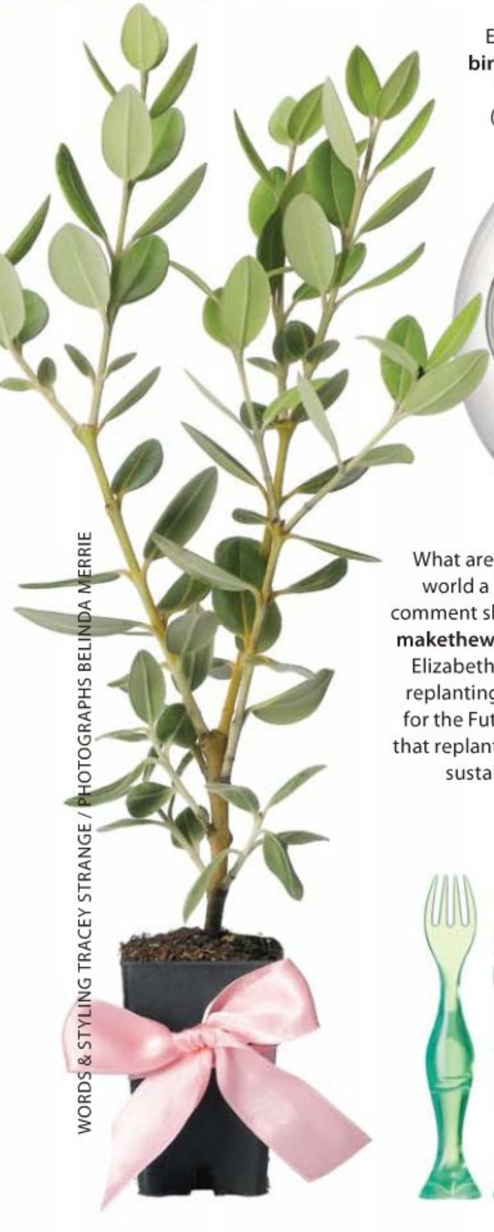
Eggcups and small ornamental containers make great vases. Izabel Lam **eggcups** $29 each from Tessuti, (09) 378 8490.

These multi-purpose gloves are a practical tool for removing dirt and skin from fresh vegetables. **Scrubbing gloves** $19.95, from Design Denmark, (09) 361 3333.

Birds are not the only things that look good in a pretty cage. Wooden **bird cage** $119, call LA Imports, (09) 580 0120 for stockists. Tulips from Vida Flores.

Eva Solo glass **bird feeder** $80 from Askew, (09) 378 1414.

Bring the outside in. Two-sided **place mat** $9.99 from Trumps, (09) 520 1215.



What are you doing to make the world a better place? For each comment shared on the new website **maketheworldaprettierplace.com**, Elizabeth Arden will sponsor the replanting of a tree through Trees for the Future, a non-profit charity that replants and rebuilds forests via sustainable agroforestry.

Gardening has never been more fun. Hot pink **spade** $58 from Meluka, (09) 309 7646.

Get fresh

Add interest to your outdoor table dressing with this lime-coloured leafy coaster. Felt **coaster** $10.90 from Trumps, (09) 520 1215.

Sticky little fingers will have no problems grasping these utensils. Alessi **cutlery set** $53 from Askew, (09) 378 1414.

WORDS & STYLING TRACEY STRANGE / PHOTOGRAPHS BELINDA MERRIE

Mark Arbour Day and World Environment Day on June 5 by planting a tree and locking up some carbon

Cuttings

Rose Thodey reports on the gardening scene

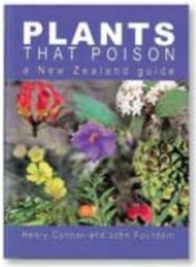
WINTER TIP

Tidy up hydrangeas by cutting back each stem to a pair of robust-looking buds. If your area is prone to frosts, leave the old flowerheads on to protect the fresh buds from frostbite until the end of winter or even mid-spring. Push the old pruned heads back under the bush, especially the blue ones as they will return aluminium to the soil. Cover with mulch so they don't fly around in the wind.

BLANK CANVAS

Take some winter photographs so that you can focus on how your garden looks when it is stripped back to its bones. If it looks decidedly anorexic, plant some more evergreens to give it a stronger shape with more depth. Or add solid structures such as obelisks or pergolas that won't disappear with the winter chill.

PLANTS THAT POISON



When it comes to poisonous plants it pays to know what you're dealing with, especially where small children and animals are concerned. A new publication, *Plants That Poison: a New Zealand Guide*, by Henry Connor and John Fountain, is a sensible and useful guide. Deadly mushrooms and plants that irritate the skin are included, as well as garden favourites such as winter-flowering daphnes and hellebores. Don't throw the dog an oleander stick or a yew branch and teach your children to be wary of dark or colourful seeds and berries. Buy this book from your local bookstore or see www.mwpress.co.nz.

ORDER UP

Mail-order nurseries are a gardener's friend in winter when it's too cold and wet to work outside. Whatever your preferences, there will be a nursery to suit. NZ Gardens Online (www.gardens.co.nz) has a comprehensive list that will lead you to specialist suppliers, some stocking a single variety and others offering a wide choice of plants, from the sweet-smelling to the subtropical.

FROST FREE FOR WEEKS...

Heading into the frosty season can be nerve-racking for orchardists and vineyard owners but a spray-on product, ThermoMax, has been shown by HortResearch trials to provide a significant degree of protection. For Jocelyn and Peter Coyle of Totara Waters Subtropical Garden, at Whenuapai west of Auckland, it's provided a welcome break from covering tender plants such as agaves, palms and susceptible orchids every night. Winter holidays are once again a possibility as protection lasts for up to three weeks, though the Coyles stress that you should check long-term weather forecasts and use frost cloth as well if severe drops in temperature are predicted. See www.bdmax.co.nz or call 0800 735 859. ■

PHOTOGRAPHS: FRANCOIS DE HEEL/PHOTOLIBRARY; GIL HANLY (BOTTOM RIGHT)

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Down to earth

Craftsman Michael Grace helps gardens take shape

STORY ROSE THODEY / **PHOTOGRAPHS** JANE USSHER

OBELISKS ARE ONE of the most pleasing forms you can have in a garden – as with any art form, a strong, simple statement will often leave the most lasting impression. They were originally intended as plant support and can still fulfill that role. But, depending on their structure, they may be better left unadorned so their graceful shapes can be fully appreciated. When the garden is bare in winter, they really come into their own.

Well-crafted classic garden structures have been hard to find in New Zealand over the years but Michael Grace of Treillage of Brookby, south of Auckland, has made all that much simpler. A highly skilled craftsman and competent mathematician, Michael had often seen and appreciated such pieces while travelling overseas with his wife Dulcie. So he decided to make some for his own garden.

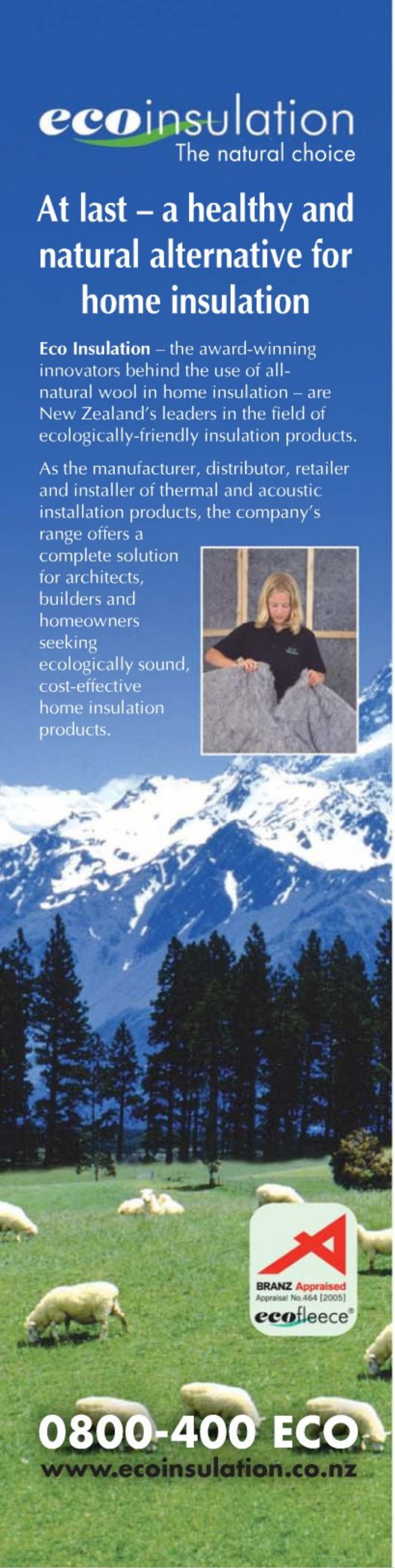
"It is a case of a hobby turned into a business and then getting totally out of hand," he says. "People are very happy to pay me to play in my workshop."

Michael says he can do pretty much anything and gets all sorts of requests. "People often start off with the idea of growing roses up the obelisks but then realise that they are a very clever statement of structure and decide not to cover them in stuff."

Attractive four-sided arbours feature in his repertoire along with highly complex formal pergolas and colonnades destined to become family heirlooms. Because of the curves and angles involved in this kind of architecture, every piece has to conform to a complex geometrical equation. >

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A trellis archway frames a formal garden. Michael Grace. Ladder-style obelisks with "Turk's head" tops.

OBELISK PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED BY MICHAEL GRACE



Michael created this beautiful garden pavilion with its complex trelliswork.

"The calculator is the most frequently used tool in the workshop."

Michael makes obelisks in two sizes, 1.6 and 2.1 metres (although he has made one at a lofty 3.5 metres tall), and says they tend to look best in groups. All the timber is pre-treated and stained or painted before being assembled. Michael warns that an enamel finish will be a little more high-maintenance (wash them down when you have your house done) but they will look good forever.

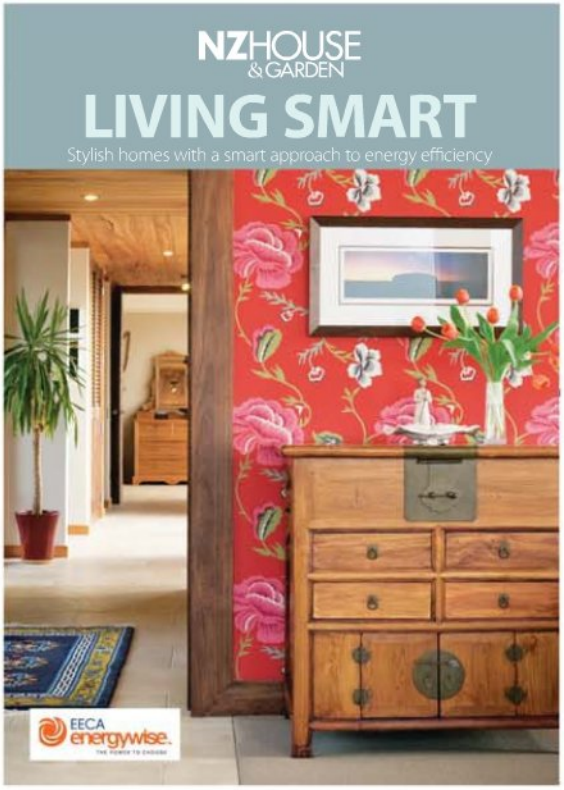
Apart from a range of standard designs, most of Michael's work is individually designed and crafted for a particular location, which makes him especially popular with landscape designers looking for a specific effect.

With the onset of the recession, Michael has diversified into designing individual planters, such as a concentric octagon for those who want an original design feature that fits their precise needs, not just another plain raised bed. They can be used to grow vegetables or a potager mixture of flowers and veges with different coloured leaves. Another addition has been quality outside refectory tables complete with strong, simple forms on which to sit – all finished in clear flooring-grade varnish.

Michael counts himself as being particularly fortunate to have had a handy dad. "I used to muck around with him as a kid, and then I've been lucky enough to have a son who has been drawn to the sound of the skilsaw since he was three. Now he helps me with some of the bigger constructions."

An avid collector of second-hand tools, Michael likes using implements that someone else has used. He recently chanced upon 50 carpenters' vices in a second-hand shop: a sign of changing priorities perhaps, as the local school had apparently converted their practical skills classroom into a computer lab.

See more designs at www.treillage.co.nz



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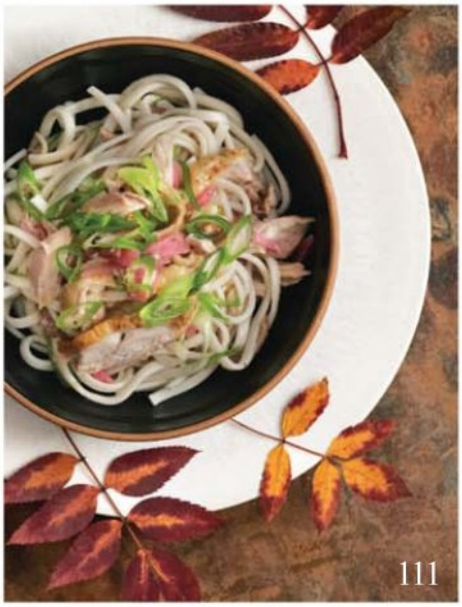
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STARRY NIGHT

Celebrate Matariki, our mid-winter new year, with a star-studded dinner

RECIPES JO WILCOX
PHOTOGRAPHS
MELANIE JENKINS/FLASH STUDIOS
STYLING CLAUDIA KOZUB

Menu

Marinated Coconut Fish

Grilled Mussels with Bacon & Almonds

Venison & Mushrooms with Red Wine Glaze

Kumara Gratin with Ginger & Thyme

Caramelised Apple & Macadamia Puddings

Marinated Coconut Fish

This cold dish is a refreshing little taster to pique guests' appetites. Marinating the fish in acidic citrus juice "cooks" the flesh, turning it white.

- 400g very fresh white fish (eg monkfish, snapper, tarakihi)
- ⅔ cup fresh lime and lemon juice (about 2 limes and 2 lemons)
- 250ml coconut cream
- 1 tablespoon sweet chilli sauce
- 1 tablespoon chopped coriander leaves
- 1 spring onion, finely sliced
- Extra coriander and lime wedges for garnish

Cut fish into small bite-sized pieces, place in a glass or ceramic bowl and toss with citrus juice. Marinate in the fridge for about 4 hours, turning occasionally, until flesh has turned white (the length of time this takes will depend on the type of fish used; firmer fleshed fish will take longer).

Drain excess juice from fish and fold in coconut cream, sweet chilli sauce, coriander and spring onions. Chill until serving (this dish is best eaten within a few hours). Serve in small bowls or glasses, garnished with coriander and a lime wedge. *Makes about 2 cups (6 small portions)*

Marking Matariki

- Once a year, Matariki – also known as the Pleiades star cluster – can be seen twinkling in the winter sky, usually at the end of May or in early June. The sighting of the next new moon in June signals the Maori New Year, a traditional time of celebration and the beginning of a new cycle of life.
- Matariki rises on the north-east horizon, around the same spot as the rising sun. The best time to view the seven-star constellation is about half an hour before dawn.
- The Matariki stars are famous world-wide – in Greece, several important temples face towards Matariki; in Japan, the Subaru brand has taken the Japanese name for the constellation.
- Matariki is a time when people gather to share food, hospitality and entertainment and to celebrate the unique place in which we live.

Grilled Mussels with Bacon and Almonds

Attractive, inexpensive and plentiful, New Zealand green-lipped mussels make an excellent starter – especially when topped with a piquant flavoured butter, tasty bacon and crispy almonds.

About 30 mussels (or 5-6 mussels per person)
1 cup white wine
2 celery stalks
150g butter, softened
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
1 teaspoon finely grated lemon zest
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
150g streaky bacon, finely chopped
70g flaked almonds
Baby greens for garnish

Scrub mussels and remove beards. Place mussels in a large pot with wine and celery, cover and simmer until they spring open.

Drain the mussels, discarding any that have not opened. Detach mussel meat from shells and place them back in half-shells on a baking tray.

In a small bowl combine the butter, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, lemon zest and garlic. Dot the mussels with flavoured butter and sprinkle with chopped bacon and flaked almonds. Grill for 4-5 minutes until golden and bubbling (watch the almonds don't burn). Serve garnished with baby salad greens. *Serves 6* >

Work plan

2-3 days ahead: Make toffee garnish for the dessert.

Day before: Steam mussels (store covered in the fridge) and prepare flavoured butter. Marinate venison. Make kumara gratin. Bake apple puddings.

In the morning: Marinate fish.

2-3 hours ahead: Drain marinated fish and add remaining ingredients. Prepare mussels for grilling (keep them chilled).

1 hour ahead: Take venison from fridge and assemble other ingredients. Cut gratin ready for reheating.

Just before serving: Grill mussels. Cook venison dish. Reheat gratin. Steam green vegetable of choice. Reheat puddings in microwave.

According to tradition, Matariki has two meanings: "tiny eyes" and "the eyes of God"

Kumara Gratin with Ginger and Thyme

Use any colour kumara or a mixture for this tasty variation on scalloped potatoes.

- 4 medium kumara (about 900g)
- 1 cup cream
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh ginger
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme
- ½ cup freshly grated parmesan plus extra for topping

Preheat oven to 180°C. Butter an oven dish about 20cm x 25cm. Peel kumara and slice thinly (a mandolin is a useful tool for this).

Combine cream, ginger, thyme and parmesan and season with salt and pepper.

Arrange kumara slices in layers in the oven dish. Pour cream mixture over and sprinkle top with a little extra cheese.

Bake 30-40 minutes or until golden on top and kumara is tender.

This dish can be scooped straight from the pan or cut into tidy single-serve portions. To prepare individual servings, let the gratin cool completely then cut into portions with a knife or cutter.

Reheat on a lined baking tray in a moderate oven for about 10 minutes or until warmed through. *Serves 6* >

Venison and Mushrooms with Red Wine Glaze

Prime New Zealand venison is a delicious treat, although care must be taken to avoid overcooking it, otherwise it will not be tender and juicy. Beef fillet would also work well with the flavours in this recipe.

- 800g-1kg venison fillets
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 teaspoon juniper berries, crushed under the blade of a knife
- 1 tablespoon chopped rosemary
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 30g butter
- 6 large field mushrooms, halved
- 1 cup red wine
- 2 cups beef stock
- 1 tablespoon redcurrant jelly (or quince paste)
- 1 tablespoon cornflour (or arrowroot if you have it) mixed with 2 tablespoons cold water

Marinate venison in combined oil, juniper berries, rosemary and a good grinding of black pepper for at least 2 hours. Turn the meat occasionally.

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Place a large frying pan over medium-high heat and sear venison on all sides until coloured. Transfer meat to a baking pan and place in the oven to roast for 6-10 minutes (depending on size) or until cooked medium-rare. Set aside somewhere warm to rest.

Meanwhile, add butter to the unwashed frying pan along with the mushrooms and sauté for 2-3 minutes until softened. Set aside and keep warm.

Add wine to pan and simmer until reduced by about half. Add stock and redcurrant jelly and bring to the boil. Stir in cornflour paste and simmer until thickened. Return mushrooms to the pan along with any juices from the venison pan and heat through.

Slice venison and arrange with the mushroom halves on heated plates. Drizzle with red wine glaze and serve immediately with the kumara gratin and steamed green vegetables. *Serves 6*

Caramelised Apple and Macadamia Puddings

Use a blended honey with native manuka to add a Kiwi touch to these little puddings.

30g butter
2 large sweet apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
70g macadamias
¼ cup manuka and wildflower honey
2 tablespoons each: brandy, water
Sponge:
125g butter, softened
½ cup sugar
2 eggs
1 cup self-raising flour, sifted
2 tablespoons milk
Toffee* for garnish (optional)
Cream or ice cream to serve

Preheat oven to 175°C. Melt butter in a frying pan, add apples and nuts and sauté until just coloured. Add honey, brandy and water and simmer 2-3 minutes until apples are tender. Spoon mixture into 6 greased ramekins (about 1 cup capacity).

Sponge: Beat the butter and sugar until thick and pale then beat in eggs one at a time. Fold in flour and milk. Spoon batter over warm apple and bake 15-20 minutes, until puffed and golden. Allow to stand for 5 minutes before turning out on to serving plates. Garnish with toffee shards and serve with cream. *Serves 6*

*To make toffee, heat ¾ cup sugar with ¼ cup water until dissolved then simmer without stirring until golden. Pour on to a tinfoil-lined tray to create a thin coating. Cool then snap into irregular pieces. Store in an airtight container.

For a Cinnamon Sugar Star Biscuit recipe go to www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz.

Wine suggestions

Complement the fish with **Palliser's Martinborough Méthode** ($25). For the mussels, try **Goldwater Wairau Valley Sauvignon Blanc 2008** ($20) and for the venison Mills Reef's legendary **Elspeth Syrah 2006** ($39). **Rose Tree Cottage Noble Riesling 2007** ($24) will be perfect with dessert. *Yvonne Marie Lorkin*

Silver candelabra, glasses, cutlery, napkins and napkin rings from The Studio of Tableware, (09) 638 8082; silver votives from French Country Collections, (09) 376 6440; chairs from Le Forge, (09) 638 7900; fabric used for curtains and tablecloth from Mokum Textiles, 0800 933 586; model's clothing and shoes from Yvonne Bennetti, (09) 361 2388; Tse Tse Confetti plates and bowls, Tse Tse silver and white cups and silver light from Tessuti, (09) 378 8490; glass candlesticks from Chambers, (09) 376 6479; table runner, favour boxes and star candles stylist's own.

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Chilli Miso Eggplant with Tofu Ginger Dressing

Discover the subtle delights of this cuisine with delicious, easy-to-prepare dishes

RECIPES & TEXT PETER GORDON / **PHOTOGRAPHS** JEAN CAZALS

Turning Japanese

Udon Noodle, Chicken and
Pickled Ginger Salad

"If a man has no tea in him, he is incapable of understanding truth and beauty"

JAPANESE PROVERB

THE FOOD OF JAPAN is one of my favourite cuisines, as the flavours tend to be clear, clean and uncluttered. Japanese food is by no means boring or dull; it is the subtlety that appeals to me. What I've created here are recipes that are inspired by Japan, rather than being pure Japanese, using ingredients that you'll probably have to look that bit harder for. But once you have the basics – miso, mirin, a Japanese soy sauce (rather than a heavy Chinese style), sesame oil, a little seaweed and possibly rice vinegar – you'll be set.

Udon Noodle, Chicken and Pickled Ginger Salad

This simple salad makes a great first course or lunchtime meal. Udon noodles are made with a mixture of wheat and rice flours and have an interesting, slightly chewy texture.

- 4 chicken thighs (skin on, bone in)
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil (plus ½ tablespoon extra)
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- 250-270g dried udon noodles (or use soba or any other noodles)
- 2 spring onions, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons pickled pink ginger, finely shredded
- 1 teaspoon ginger pickling liquid

Preheat oven to 180°C. Place chicken thighs in a non-reactive roasting dish lined with baking paper (to make it easier to clean). Combine soy sauce, 1 tablespoon of the sesame oil, ginger and garlic. Pour over chicken and roast until chicken is completely cooked, 40-45 minutes.

Remove chicken to a plate and, when dish is cool enough to handle, pour cooking juices into a glass. Leave to go cold then place in the fridge to set the chicken fat. Once the fat has set, scrape it off the top of the juices and discard. Keep the juices out of the fridge.

Bring a large pot of water to the boil, add noodles and cook over a rapid simmer for 10 minutes or until just cooked al dente. Drain and rinse under cold water for 10 seconds only then return to a clean bowl. Add the cooking juices and the extra ½ tablespoon sesame oil and toss together.

Remove chicken meat from bones (discard skin too if preferred) and slice into pieces. Place chicken in a bowl with spring onions, shredded ginger and ginger juice. Add a little salt and toss together.

Add half the chicken mixture to the noodles, toss together and divide between 4 bowls. Place remaining chicken mixture on top and drizzle with any juices. Eat straight away. *Serves 4 as a starter*

Chilli Miso Eggplant with Tofu Ginger Dressing

The sweet miso paste used for this dish (pictured page 111) is based on the well-known den miso that Japanese restaurant Nobu uses as a marinade in its iconic dish Black Cod. Slather it over chunks of hapuka or tuna before grilling as well.

- 1 teaspoon each: vegetable oil, sesame oil
- 1 red onion, diced
- ½-1 red chilli, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds
- 3 tablespoons miso (all miso pastes will work but the darker the miso the more salty and robust its flavour)
- 150ml mirin
- 2 eggplants (or 4 if they're fairly small)
- Furikake* for garnish

Dressing:

- 1 thumb fresh ginger, peeled and thinly sliced against the grain
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar (or cider vinegar or lemon juice)
- 1½ tablespoons soy sauce
- 150g silken tofu

Heat oils in a small-medium saucepan and sauté onion, chilli and sesame seeds until just beginning to caramelise. Stir in miso then add mirin and bring to the boil. Turn to a simmer and cook 1 minute then take off heat and cool. This mixture will keep in the fridge for a week. (Makes about 1 cup.)

Dressing: Using a stick blender or small processor, purée ginger and vinegar together then add soy sauce and tofu and purée until mixture resembles thin mayonnaise. This will keep in the fridge for a few days.

Preheat oven to 180°C and place the rack in the centre of the oven. Line a baking tray with baking paper.

Cut eggplant lengthways then score the fleshy side, using a small sharp knife and avoiding cutting through to the skin.

Dollop a tablespoon of the miso mixture on each cut side and rub it into the scored flesh. Place eggplant on the baking tray and bake 15-20 minutes, just to the point where the flesh has softened and the glaze coloured as in the photo.

These are best eaten slightly warm or at room temperature – they can be a bit intense if too hot. They'll keep in the fridge for a day or two. To serve, simply drizzle with the dressing and sprinkle with furikake. *Serves 4 as a starter*

**Furikake is a seaweed-based seasoning that is traditionally sprinkled over rice. It is sold in Asian foodstores or you can buy New Zealand-made (see Small Bites, page 120).* >

Teriyaki-style Salmon
with Seaweed and Rice

Miso, Swede, Leek and Carrot Soup

Teriyaki-style Salmon with Seaweed and Rice

Teriyaki is a style familiar to many. If you've got a heavy skillet (or even a barbecue) this is a good way to cook salmon.

- 4 x 180g skinless salmon fillets, all the same thickness
- 5 tablespoons (75ml) soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons mirin
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar (or use cider vinegar)
- 200g short-grain rice (I used a germinated brown rice called GABA Komachi)
- A few fingers of dried arame, hijiki or shredded kelp (I used hijiki)
- 1 scant tablespoon wakame seaweed (or use New Zealand karengo)
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1½ tablespoons vegetable or avocado oil

Place salmon fillets in a container just large enough to hold them side by side. Combine soy, mirin and vinegar and pour over fish. Turn fillets over twice then cover dish and chill for 30 minutes. Turn fish over again and return to fridge for 1-4 hours.

Rinse rice and cook according to packet instructions. Turn off heat and stand for 15 minutes with the lid on.

Meanwhile, place arame and wakame in separate bowls, barely cover with warm water and leave to soak. Once rice has rested 10 minutes, drain all but 1 tablespoon of liquid from arame and add it and the arame to the rice, gently stirring them in. Put lid on and set aside. Drain liquid from wakame, pour lemon juice on top and mix in.

Place a heavy-based pan (a non-stick one works well) over medium-high heat. Remove fish from marinade and pat dry. Add oil to pan then place salmon pieces in and cook 1½ minutes. Carefully flip over and cook another 1½ minutes. Add 3 tablespoons marinade to the pan, turn off heat and leave fish to rest in the pan for 2 minutes. By then it should be just cooked, which is all you want – any further and it can dry out. (The mirin in the marinade causes the fish to caramelise, so it's quite normal that the fish blackens a little.)

To serve, divide rice between 4 plates, sit a piece of salmon on top, drizzle pan juices over and top with wakame. *Serves 4*

Miso, Swede, Leek and Carrot Soup

This wonderful soup is both sweetish and savoury and, though it is more like a broth than a heavy winter soup, it's very hearty.

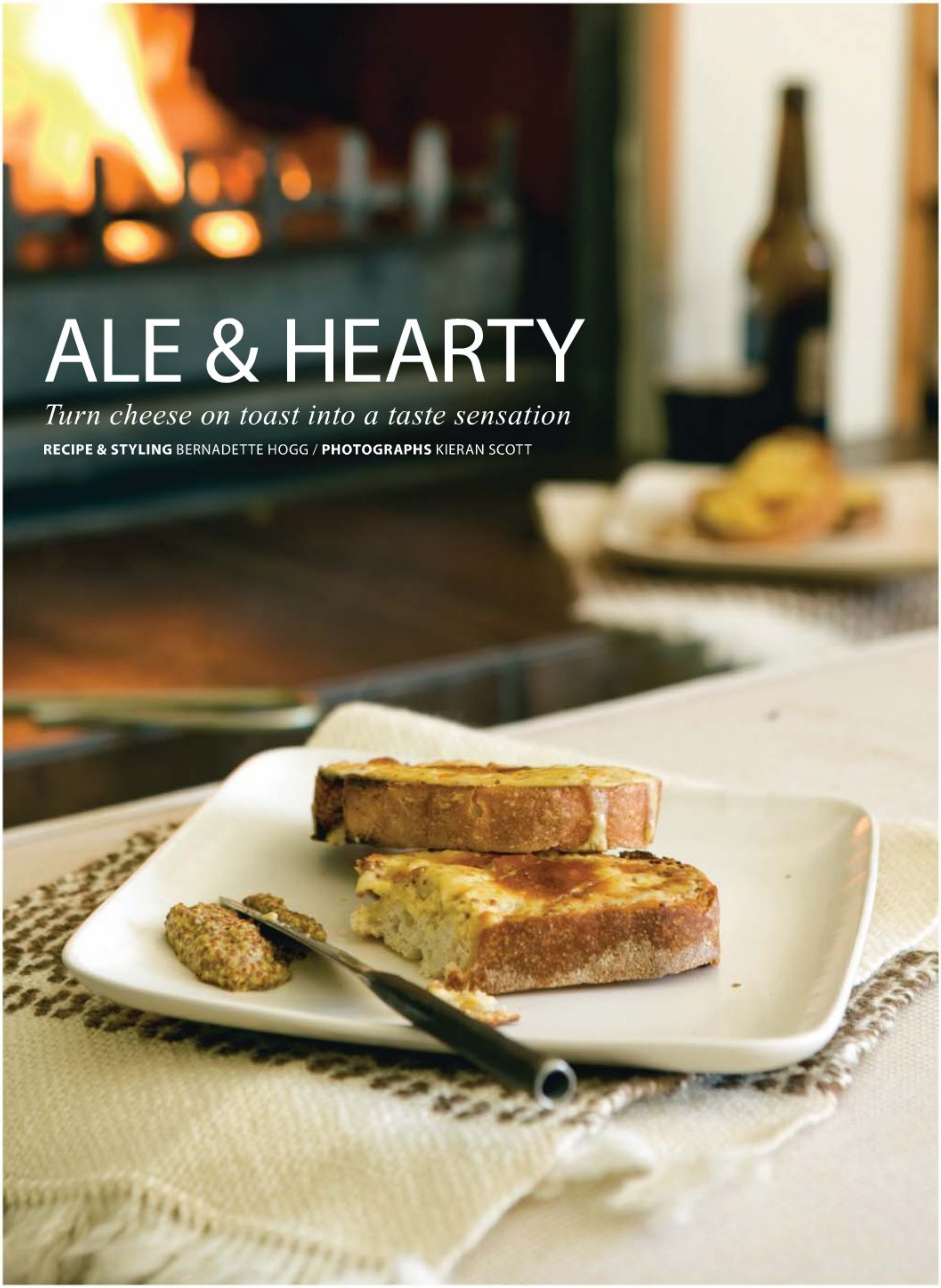
- 50g butter (or vegetable oil)
- 1 leek, thinly sliced
- 1 thumb fresh ginger, peeled and finely chopped
- 400g swede, peeled and cut into 1cm chunks (or use pumpkin or parsnip or a mixture)
- 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 x 10cm piece of kombu seaweed, briefly rinsed and patted dry (or use 1 heaped tablespoon New Zealand karengo, which doesn't need to be rinsed)
- 50ml mirin
- 2 pinches saffron
- 2 tablespoons white miso paste (shiro miso)
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce

Melt butter in a large pot, add leek and ginger and cook over a moderate heat, stirring often, until wilted but not coloured. Stir in swede, carrots, kombu, mirin and saffron. Cover and cook over low heat for 5 minutes, stirring twice. (If using karengo instead of kombu, don't add it until you add the miso, near the end of cooking.)

Add 300ml cold water, bring to the boil then turn to a simmer and cook, lid on, until swede is just tender.

Stir miso and soy sauce into 100ml water to dissolve miso then add to pot with another 600ml cold water. Bring to the boil and simmer 5 minutes uncovered. Taste for seasoning, adding extra soy or salt as needed. *Serves 6 as a starter*

For a Nashi, Ginger, Peanut and Sesame Salad recipe go to www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz.



ALE & HEARTY

Turn cheese on toast into a taste sensation

RECIPE & STYLING BERNADETTE HOGG / **PHOTOGRAPHS** KIERAN SCOTT

Welsh Rarebit

8 slices sourdough bread
1 tablespoon butter
200g mature cheddar, grated
1 egg, lightly beaten
½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
3 tablespoons stout or other dark ale
1 tablespoon crème fraiche

1 Toast or grill the bread on both sides. Melt the butter in a heavy-based saucepan.

2 Add the cheese, egg, Worcestershire sauce and mustard to the pan and season with salt and pepper to taste.

3 Cook very gently (1-2 minutes), gradually stirring in the stout and crème fraiche, until mixture is smooth.

4 Preheat the grill. Spread the cheese mixture on the toast, right to the edges. Place on a lined baking tray and grill until golden and bubbling. Criss-cross the topping with a knife and serve immediately. *Serves 4*

Cook's notes

- Welsh Rarebit or Welsh Rabbit – the jury is still out on the correct name for this old dish but it is believed to have first been made in the 1700s. Many say it originated in England or Scotland, not Wales. How it came to be so named is uncertain, but one legend claims that peasants were not allowed to eat rabbits caught in hunts on the estates of the nobility so they used melted cheese as a substitute.
- Stout or Guinness are the traditional ales used in this recipe but any dark ale does the job and there are some very good New Zealand-made dark ales.
- An aged cheddar gives the dish great flavour but do not be afraid to try other tasty cheeses. Try adding blue cheese to the mix, grill on wholemeal toast topped with lightly toasted chopped walnuts and wash it down with the remaining ale.
- Cook the cheese mixture over a very low heat to prevent the cheese from separating and becoming oily.
- It is important to spread the cheese mixture right to the edges of the toast; this helps to prevent the crusts from catching and burning under the grill.
- There are plenty of uses for the crème fraiche left over in the pottle after making rarebit – this handy dairy product can be boiled, reduced and thickened without the risk of curdling. It is an excellent ingredient in soups and casseroles and adds richness and body to sauces. It can be used as a substitute for sour cream in most recipes and for cream in many.
- Other dishes have been invented based on Welsh Rarebit: Buck Rarebit is Welsh Rarebit topped with a poached egg; York Rarebit has a smear of mustard spread on the toast then a layer of ham and the cheese mixture grilled on top.
- Other tasty suggestions: spread chutney on the toast before topping with the cheese; serve rarebit for brunch topped with crispy bacon; for a new take on cauliflower cheese, fold cooked cauliflower florets through the cheese mixture before placing it on toast and grilling; or simply enjoy your rarebit with a drizzle of Worcestershire sauce or some chutney or mustard on the side.

Gone to the birds

Hawks take up border patrol at a Hawke's Bay vineyard

WORDS YVONNE MARIE LORKIN / **PHOTOGRAPHS** STUDIO CAFÉ NOIR

MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: VICTORIA PROEBFTEL

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A harrier hawk takes a lunch break. Rob Beard by his customised feeding platform. Vines cast off their pruning tapes as they grow. Gewürztraminer grapes ripe for the picking.

BY THIS TIME OF YEAR New Zealand's grape harvest is well and truly over, the summer's bounty settling nicely in cool, dark tanks and barrels, undergoing the magic process that will eventually create wine. Though it's been an absolute blinder of a vintage, it hasn't all been easy pickings for our grape growers, because in lovely hot, dry summers the vines channel all their energy into producing very small, very ripe berries. That's good news for winemakers – and absolutely fantastic news if you're a bird.

Grape growers with vineyards near trees find themselves having to take drastic action every summer to protect their fruit from dive-bombing sticky beaks. Rob Beard, viticulturalist at Hawke's Bay's Maimai Creek vineyards, has double the trouble because his grapes are surrounded by maize and corn as well. "Our Meeanee vineyard [just south of Napier] is where we grow our sauvignon blanc, riesling and gewürztraminer [grapes], which are naturally very sweet and aromatic," he says. "The birds can't resist them."

To deter these feathered fiends from pecking the vineyard to pieces, Maimai Creek could have invested in expensive nets to hang over the vines. Or they could employ someone armed with a rifle to zoom up and down the rows on a motorbike – another costly option. They could purchase a not-so-costly but equally noisy gas-powered bird-scaring device, designed to frighten birds with regular ear-splitting booms that replicate gunshots. "But birds aren't silly," says Rob. "They soon work out it's just noise."

Some growers opt for the traditional scarecrow option, with limited success, but Rob made the decision a couple of years back to fight fire with fire. Or, more precisely, to fight birds with other birds – namely harrier hawks. How does it work? The fearsome, predatory nature of harrier hawks scares birds. It's a bit like being in a boat surrounded by sharks: you're naturally reluctant to dive in for a swim.

"The hawks unsettle the birds so they don't want to land in the vineyard. And, when the birds are in the air, they're not on the grapes."

Over the past five years, as part of Maimai Creek's biodiversity programme, they've been introducing ways to maximise the advantages of all the beneficial species that coexist in and around their vineyards, including using wild hawks for bird control. Rob also uses sheep to leaf-pluck and encourages various insects to help manage problem crawlies such as mealy bugs and leaf-roller caterpillars. They're seeing the benefits of using these biological helpers with the vines now producing better-quality fruit than ever. But Rob is quick to acknowledge it didn't happen overnight.

"It's taken a good few years to become effective because, first, to attract the hawks I had to earn their trust. So I started feeding them things like rabbits and carrion on a platform that I gradually built up higher and higher until it was above the canopy. Hawks aren't meant to feed up in the sky. It's a bit like us trying to eat up on a ladder. But now they associate that with food so they fly a circuit around the vineyard to look for food and the other birds just disappear. A grape grower who used to be a farmer told me that not so long ago there was a bounty on hawks but he's now seeing them in a different light."

Maimai Creek manager Mal McLennan now has 17 banded harrier hawks patrolling the 21ha vineyard and raising chicks in the surrounding area. The vineyard recently started offering local businesses or members of the community the chance to name a hawk when contributing to its native planting initiative. In return for a $50 plant voucher or a donation of the equivalent amount in native plants, sponsors get to name a hawk and receive a three-pack of wine. They also have the satisfaction of knowing they've helped create a natural, native border of food and shelter for the various species that Maimai Creek wants to preserve and nurture.

Venison backstraps

When he's not in the vineyard, Rob Beard is out indulging his other passion – hunting. He even makes his own bacon, but his speciality dish is venison backstraps. Here's his favourite method for cooking them:

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Roll whole backstraps in wholegrain mustard then wrap with wild pork bacon (or prosciutto will do) and bake for 10 minutes. Reduce the heat to 140°C and roast for another 20 minutes. Rest the meat for 10 minutes then serve with a creamy, peppery potato gratin, steamed greens and a large glass of Maimai Creek Hawke's Bay Syrah 2007.

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Tick Tip #31

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Kurrajong Kitchen **lavosh** (Armenian-style crackers), $5 for 130g, original or wholemeal, from supermarkets.

Use Golden Mills **chestnut flour** in baking, porridge or to thicken soups. Milled in Christchurch. $11/500g, www.goldenfields.co.nz.

Italian **truffle-infused** butter, rice and polenta are imported by Sabato, 0800 722 286. Priced from $20.

Small bites

Entertaining editor Sally Butters selects good things to eat, try and buy

Addmore sparkling **elderflower rosé** contains a hint of verjuice to give it delicate colour and flavour. $14.50 for 750ml, 0508 435 337. Made in Geraldine.

Pacific Harvest makes **furikaki**, a Japanese seasoning, using local kelp with citrus, chilli or garlic flavours. Look for it in health food stores or call (09) 415 9658.

Rutherford & Meyer's award-winning **fruit pastes** are a must on smart cheese boards. $6 each, call (04) 976 0251.

Urban Appetite's **gourmet dressings** and sauces are gluten-free and downright delicious. About $7 at supermarkets or call 0800 889 453.

In season: olive oil

Now is the time to enjoy freshly bottled olive oils from local producers. The oil is in best condition up to six months from harvest so look for bottles with the harvest date noted on the label. Store in a cool, dark pantry and try to use up an opened bottle within a month. Slosh, dip, drizzle and savour the intense lively flavours that are the hallmark of New Zealand-produced olive oils. ■

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BEST FOOT FORWARD

The choices in quality flooring are expanding in leaps and bounds

WORDS MEGAN NICOL REED
STYLING CLAUDIA KOZUB
STYLE EDITOR TRACEY STRANGE
PHOTOGRAPHS JACKIE MEIRING

On bamboo flooring in coffee $77/m from Ecodure, (09) 480 3139: (from left to right) Designers Guild Tancredi **cushion** in Moss POA from Icon Textiles, (09) 302 1652; Madelaine **chair** $1626.25 from French Country Collections, (09) 376 6440; twisted shaggy **rug** in white POA from Source Mondial, (09) 377 3068; small round **stool** used as a side table $177 from French Country Collections; Aida tapered glass **vase** $75 from Capulet, (09) 300 9404; paperweight and photos stylist's own; aluminium **aeroplane** $130.50 from Corso De' Fiori, (09) 307 9166.

WE EXPERIENCE MUCH OF OUR WORLD THROUGH THE SOLES OF OUR FEET, AND IT HAS A DIRECT EFFECT ON OUR PHYSICAL WELL-BEING. SO, TO HELP YOU CHOOSE THE RIGHT SURFACE FOR YOUR FEET, WE BRING YOU THE LOWDOWN ON FLOORING

On linear textile tiles in white 600x600, $77.50/sqm from Heritage Tiles, (09) 270 8796: (bottom to top) Rebell pendant **light** $249 from Lighting Direct, (09) 815 0099; Space **coffee table** POA from Corporate Culture, (09) 379 4466; Dot to Dot **rug** made to order POA from Designer Rugs, (09) 300 6116; Space **chair** POA from Corporate Culture; leather **jacket** $99 from The Warehouse, 0800 422 274; books, plate and water glasses stylist's own.

On Knightsbridge Adecco Court carpet $145/m from Carpet Court, (09) 837 0845: zebra **rug** $1445 from Debandada, (09) 522 1050; **coffee table** $2350, **book** *Dior: 60 Years of Style* $386.10, Henry Dean large **hurricane** $97, medium $59, small $49.90 and leather **pouffe** $630, all from Corso De' Fiori; camera and chess set stylist's own.

SOFT FLOORING

Carpets, rugs and mats are naturally warmer than harder flooring surfaces and they absorb sound, creating comfortable spaces. Regular vacuuming and an annual professional clean make them a low-maintenance option.

Carpet

Wool is considered the premium carpet fibre. It ages well, regulates humidity, is naturally flame-retardant and anti-allergenic and is a renewable resource. Synthetic carpet is less likely to fade and stands up better to wear and tear.

Darker colours make a room appear smaller and cosier, while lighter colours create a sense of spaciousness. Desiree Keown of Cavalier Bremworth suggests you take a carpet sample home to check the colour in both daylight and artificial light

A carpet's texture depends on its construction type. Cut pile feels plush but is prone to tracking. Loop pile is suited to busy households, as it doesn't show footprints or dirt as much. Combination cut and loop adds interest with a pattern made out of the contrasting piles.

Prices can range from $39/m for a synthetic carpet through to $400 to $500/m for a top-end wool carpet. Installation, with underlay, costs between $17 and $25/sqm. When comparing prices, establish whether you're talking lineal or square metres. >

1 Shaggy rug in colour ARS 306 POA from Source Mondial, (09) 377 3068 2 Bernabeifreeman Folk made-to-measure rug POA from Designer Rugs, (09) 300 6116 3 Feltex Classic Misura carpet (deleted range, similar available from Carpet Court) 4 Feltex Horizon Court Kensington carpet $145/m from Carpet Court, (09) 837 0845.

1 BYZANTINE VELVET CUSHIONS **$19.99ea**

2 KREMLIN VASE **$29.99**

3 GORKI RUG **$199.99**

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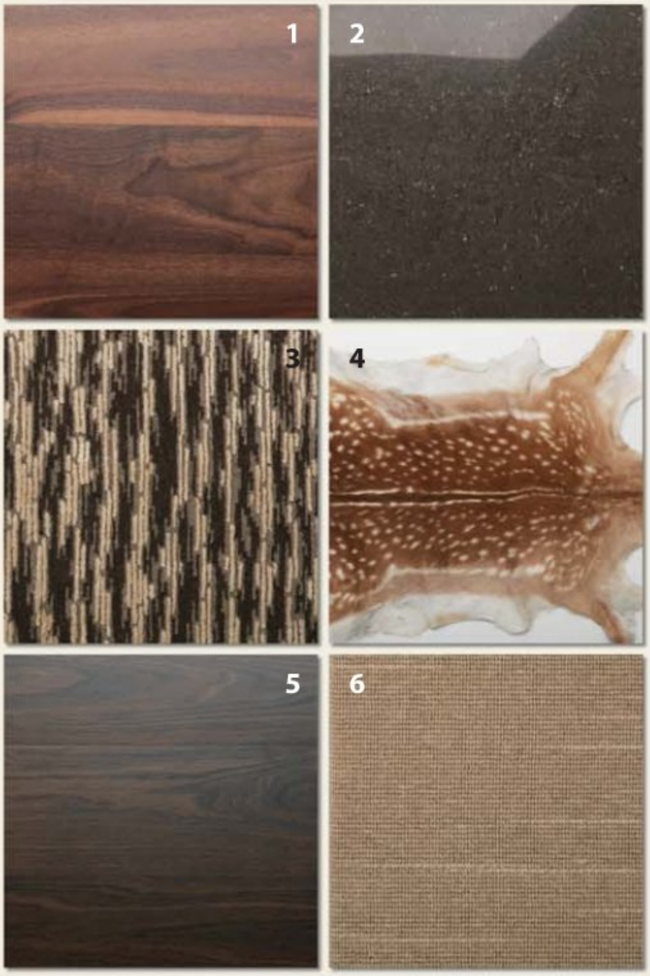
Rugs

Rugs can be used to delineate areas within a room. Small rugs draw in a space, whereas large rugs will open it up. Placement is key, says Laura Furey of Designer Rugs: "If your couch is on legs, position the rug under it to give the illusion of flow."

Natural vegetable mattings

For a textural difference, sisal, coir and seagrass can be laid or bound into mats, says Lincoln MacIntyre at Artisan Floorwear. Sisal, the most popular, is made from agave fibre and has a natural shine. Coir is made from coconut husk and is rougher, but light and flexible. While seagrass is cheaper, it has fewer colour options. Prices start at $51/sqm and go to $190/sqm. >



1 Ekowood walnut $240/m from Ekowood, (03) 366 0559 2 Gem Choco 450x450 tile $88.65/sqm from Heritage Tiles, (09) 270 8796 3 Carpet in Random Blotches POA from Source Mondial, (09) 377 3068 4 Fallow deer skin $295 from Debandada, (09) 522 1050 5 Ekowood smoked oak $195/m from Ekowood 6 Bremworth Tussore carpet in Barberry $338/m from Carpet Court, (09) 837 0845.

SOME CARS DON'T

The difference is obvious. Electronic stability control is a safety system which automatically comes in to play if your car starts to lose control. It can instantly brake individual wheels independently, making it easier to get your car back on to its intended path. Without electronic stability control, your car is far more likely to continue skidding, or even worse. So for improved and enhanced control, insist on electronic stability control in your next car.

ACC and NZ Transport Agency
New Zealand Government

rightcar.govt.nz

NTA 0100

1 Carbono Nacra tile $168/sqm from The Warehouse, 0800 422 274 **2** Ekowood Tasmanian oak $150/m from Ekowood, (03) 366 0559 **3** Irvine International Dolce Vita vinyl in Espresso $179/m from Carpet Court, (09) 837 0845 **4** Nouvelle Vague Carres D'Ivorie tile $210/m from Jacobsen, (09) 522 5560.

HARD FLOORING

Naturally durable and stain-resistant, hard floorings are ideal in a temperate climate and in households with allergy sufferers, though they can be cold, noisy, costly and tricky to lay.

Wood

Solid timber flooring Very long-lasting, this classic flooring adds instant value to a home. It's available in native softwoods such as kauri and matai (usually recycled) and imported hardwoods such as kwila or American oak. Demolition timbers are also popular for their naturally aged appearance. Most people choose to finish their floor with polyurethane (usually water-based) in gloss, semi-gloss or matt, though some are now choosing to blond or stain the wood and finish it with oil. Expect to pay anywhere from $100 to $300/sqm installed and finished.

Overlay timber flooring Constructed by laminating three layers of wood, it is about 70 per cent more stable than traditional solid wood flooring. When installed by a professional it can be refinished up to three times. The substantial surface layer of timber comes from a wide range sourced throughout the world, including oak, cherry, maple and the new smoked oak. It comes in 136mm-wide planks or the cheaper 195mm-wide three-strip made from random short lengths.

Compared to solid wood flooring, says Kevin Dore of Ekowood, engineered hardwood flooring (EHF) "is quick and easy to install, without having to wait for multiple coats of lacquer to dry. It's also more eco-friendly, with 75 per cent of the product sourced from plantation timbers." This means that, for every sqm of solid wood floor, four sqm of EHF can be produced. It can be glued at a cost of about $70/sqm, or floated over a foam underlay for about $35/sqm. Planks range from $150 to $160/sqm; three-strip ranges from $85 to $110/sqm.

New wood floors are not recommended for bathrooms and, with any wood floor, stilettos should be avoided and felt pads placed under furniture. With care, most timber floors should only need a light sand and coat of polyurethane every five years. Oiled floors will need redoing annually. Most timber floors can be laid on any level substrate in good condition.

One further option is laminate timber flooring, where a plastic photocopy of the wood grain is laminated on to board. >

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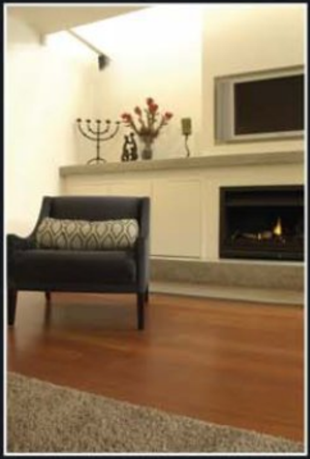

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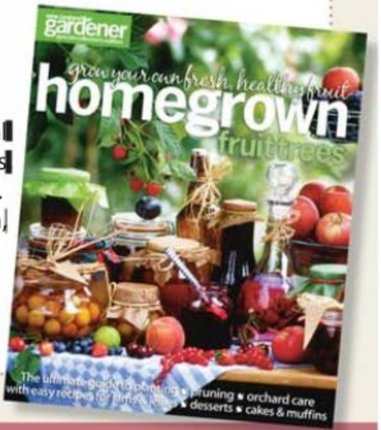


www.nzhouseandgarden.co.nz

Bamboo

Harvested every five years, bamboo grows 10 to 20 times faster than other timbers. Hannah Taylor at Jacobsen Creative Surfaces says it's one of the most eco-friendly products available. When strand-woven, it's almost twice as hard as oak. Naturally light, bamboo can be darkened and refinished. The 96mm-wide planks are about $120/sqm and cost about $50/sqm to lay.

Cork

A natural product from a renewable resource, cork is known for its quietness and excellent insulation. Available in tiles and planks, it can be coloured or blonded, though it will fade in sunlight. Like solid timber flooring, it requires sanding and coating. Expect to pay between $165 and $190/sqm laid.

Tiles

Whether you choose ceramic or porcelain, there is a vast array of shapes, colours and patterns available. Tiles are hard-wearing, especially porcelain ones, says Hannah at Jacobsen. For use in the bathroom, floor tiles must be non-slip and waterproofed. You will pay from $60 to 80/sqm for a 450x450mm tile and between $100 and $130/sqm for a 600x600mm. Installation starts from about $65/sqm for basic tiling and goes up to $100/sqm for complicated designs.

Natural stone

From granite to limestone, in slab or tile, colours cover the spectrum. Stone needs to be sealed and specific, pH-neutral cleaning products are required. Hannah at Jacobsen cautions that, unlike tiles, stone varies from piece to piece. It's more expensive to purchase and lay than tiles, but the effect is timeless and luxurious. Expect to pay from $100 to $250/sqm.

Vinyl

Flexible and hard-wearing, vinyl is ideal for kitchens, bathrooms, toilets and laundries. It comes in a wide range of colours, patterns and apparent textures – though all are smooth. It's easy-care and very economical but remember, when installing vinyl, the substrate must be in excellent condition. It will cost from $40 to $75/sqm laid.

Linoleum

Made from natural, renewable materials, linoleum is very environmentally friendly. It is more durable than vinyl but is not recommended in wet areas. Linoleum comes in block colours or a more marbled effect. It costs about $65/sqm laid.

Concrete

Thanks to its natural look and thermal efficiency, coloured concrete is growing in popularity. Cameron Grieg of Peter Fell says the natural cloudiness in its surface adds character. They have a range of 65 colours that can be added to the base grey concrete, which can also be set with inlays, scored to look like flagstones or ground back to reveal the aggregate. Although durable, concrete is porous so it must be sealed. Waxing gives a rich finish. A coloured, cut, grouted and sealed floor costs from $100 to $120/sqm. ■

extra

What's on your list this month?

Revlon Crème Gloss

Revlon's new Crème Gloss combines the full colour impact of a lipstick with the extreme shine of a lip gloss, so lips look deliciously full and feel lusciously smooth. Available in 10 gorgeous shades. www.revlon.co.nz.

Pretty Elizabeth Arden

The new floral fragrance from Elizabeth Arden. Irresistible, charming and feminine. A fragrance that makes you feel pretty. Available from all Elizabeth Arden stockists. www.ElizabethArdenPretty.co.nz.

Sanitarium

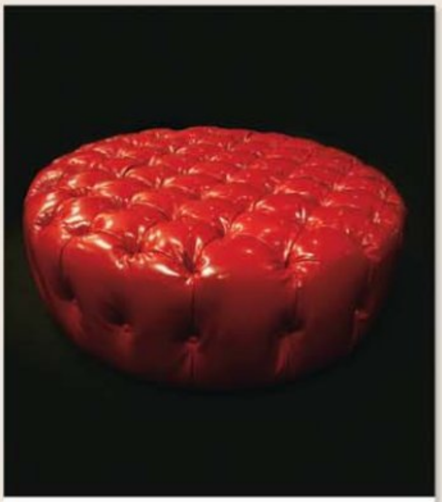
Enjoy the wholegrain goodness of new Sanitarium Cluster Crisp breakfast cereal made with crunchy oat clusters and blended with crispy golden flakes. Available in two delicious flavours: Vanilla Almond and Triple Berry. Breakfast's mix of interesting bits!

KA International

KA International has just released a fabulous range of wallpapers to complement their gorgeous European fabrics. Beautiful for bedrooms and living rooms, they give any space a sense of warmth and creativity – you'll find them irresistible. www.ka-international.com.

Cavit & Co – Lalique

The Lalique collection includes vases, ornaments, tableware, mirrors, furniture and jewellery from traditional to contemporary. Lalique Perfume is only available in New Zealand at Cavit & Co, 547a Parnell Rd, Parnell, Auckland, (09) 358 3771. www.cavitco.com.



Forma

This New Zealand-made, deep diamond-buttoned ottoman by forma (1070mm x 400mm) can be manufactured in the fabric and size of your choice. $1616 + 4.5m fabric. Visit the forma showroom, 51-53 The Strand, Parnell, Auckland. www.forma.co.nz.

urban eye

What's hot in cities around the country

AUCKLAND

SHELLEY BRIDGEMAN

1 WALLACE COTTON

This is the place for relaxed yet chic cotton bedlinen, sleepwear and accessories at prices that won't mean you need a lie-down. The new Newmarket outlet (opened in January), along with the shop in Birkenhead and the online store offer a range of contemporary home linens, including towels, duvet cover sets, aprons, tea towels and napkins. The designs – stars and stripes, gingham, florals and more – can be mixed and matched. Flannelette sheets, velvet slippers and stuffed bears and mice will take the edge off winter's chill but I couldn't resist the gardenia-scented candles and cheerful strands of bunting.

3 Teed St, Newmarket, (09) 522 2303, www.wallacecotton.com

2 MILLAR PATERSON METALS

Established in 1903, this foundry specialises in designing and manufacturing one-off pieces of ornamental brassware such as nameplates or numbers for walls or gates. All over Auckland there are cottages, houses, apartments, hotels, shops and other businesses bearing a Millar Paterson product on their front facade. Bells, door knobs, door knockers and sundials are also crafted here and electroplating is available, too. If the gleaming finish of brand new brass is not for you, though, they will apply an aged, weathered look to your just-minted hardware.

1 Halsey St, Freemans Bay, (09) 303 4619, www.milpatmetals.co.nz

3 SNOWPLANET

Right about now, avid skiers and snowboarders traditionally start praying that Mother Nature blesses our ski fields with lashings of snow. But in Silverdale, an artificial ski slope inside a massive purpose-built shed puts paid to such old-fashioned concerns. Snowplanet, maintained at a teeth-chattering -5°C, is true to its motto: real snow 365 days a year. All the usual mountain services and features are available, including lessons, ski hire, rental clothing, terrain park, chairlifts, shop, café and bar.

91 Small Rd, Silverdale, (09) 427 0044, www.snowplanet.co.nz

WELLINGTON

ANN PACKER

4 ZINC+

This post-industrial mix of zinc, retro chairs and French urban antiques in Tinakori Road is the brainchild of Trish and Dave Jenkins. Originally intended as a showroom for their web business, it's taken on a life of its own, with a snappy combination of their own zinc-topped dining tables, new French canvas on old deckchairs and refurbished filing cabinets, plus the French bric-a-brac also known as brocante. Best buy? Very cool perforated steel lightshades with red cross diffusers. Closed Mondays.

320 Tinakori Rd, Thorndon, (04) 891 0281, www.zincplus.co.nz

5 KIM'S CURIOS

Appropriately relocated in an elderly shop on the corner of Rongotai Road, veteran antiques dealer Kim Skinner has "followed her heart" to the capital after years of commuting from Milford in Auckland. As well as cabinets full of elegant china – including impeccable whole dinner sets – she has good collections of jewellery, sterling silver and special baby collectables from nursery china and Fun Ho! toys to vintage and classic baby clothes, newly knitted by Kim herself. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

2 Rongotai Rd, Kilbirnie, (04) 387 2808

6 COCOBELLE

With the irresistible pastel charm of a cupcake parlour, this delectable children's interiors shop offers Touchwood painted and wooden furniture, including custom-made drawers and bookcases – sustainable and functional of course. They also have Sally Patterson's wholesome 100 per cent cotton Apples and Pears ranges of coordinated bedlinen for littlies to big people. There are wallpaper and fabric samples galore – the latter can be made into cushions, duvets and throws – as well as beanbags, play tents, toys and, perhaps best of all, the Swedish Lundby doll's house. And the parking is easy. Closed Sundays.

204 Thorndon Quay, Thorndon, (04) 499 0995, www.cocobelle.co.nz

CHRISTCHURCH

KIM RUTTER

7 DREAM CONES

Forget it's winter and rush straight down to Dream Cones in Manchester Street, Christchurch's first and only gelateria. It sells artisan Italian gelato, yoghurt gelato and sorbet, handmade daily on site. Flavours vary from day to day, but there are always at least 28 different ones in store. Apart from the standards, the day's offerings may also include rocher (a celebration of the chocolate and hazelnut flavour of Ferrero Rocher chocolates), tiramisu and green tea. Limoncello is hard to beat, but don't take my word for it. Get tasting.

192E Manchester St, (03) 366 4942

8 HOLY SMOKE SMOKEHOUSE

Is it a café? Is it a deli? Is it a restaurant? No, it's the Holy Smoke Smokehouse! Actually, Holy Smoke covers all those things – great food, great coffee and the most fabulous range of smoked salmon, beef, duck and turkey breasts and, gloriously, slabs of succulent bacon to eat in or take away. The smoking takes place in two giant smokers (on view in the back) and the meats are then lovingly sliced by hand before making their way to you. Did I mention the prize-winning heritage building renovation that houses all this? I should have, but I got distracted by the food!

650 Ferry Rd, Woolston, (03) 943 2222, www.holysmoke.co.nz

9 MALAYSIA DELIGHTS

There is a sad shortage of Malaysian cuisine in Christchurch. Purveyors of meat drenched in peanut butter they call satay, yes, but real Malaysian cuisine? Not much. So all you aficionados out there will be thrilled to find Malaysia Delights. It's not flashy, with mains priced around $12, but where else will you find lobak, nasi lemak, roti canai, Penang fried kueh teow and satay sauce with belachan in it? If you know your hawker food, I imagine you are already revving down to the restaurant. If you've never tried Malaysian food, now you can.

79 Manchester St, (03) 366 8686

QUEENSTOWN

PETA CAREY

10 VESTA

Be prepared to be surprised, amused and inspired as you open the gate to Vesta design store and café in its historic Queenstown waterfront cottage. Kim Turner, who took over the business three years ago, reckons you need a good sense of humour with design. The range of goods is certainly quirky – from Trixie Delicious cups to Fun Ho! children's toys – but also all New Zealand-designed and of the best quality. That goes for the coffee as well, which can be sipped in the warmth of the glasshouse as you admire the fabulous lake view.

19 Marine Parade, Queenstown, (03) 442 5687, www.vestadesign.co.nz.

11 NADENE MILNE GALLERY

Writer Greg O'Brien called it "the most remote art gallery in the world". It's also one of the most charming. The Nadene Milne Gallery can be found in a historic alleyway in Arrowtown (a few steps from the now-famous Saffron restaurant and the Blue Door Bar). In its myriad rooms you'll discover some of the most inspiring artwork in New Zealand – Gretchen Albrecht, Fiona Pardington, Max Gimblett, among others. Nadene is a tireless champion of not only her exhibitors but the entire New Zealand art story.

16 Buckingham St, Arrowtown, (03) 442 0467, www.nadenemilnegallery.com

12 JACK'S POINT CLUBHOUSE

You don't need to play golf to enjoy the Jack's Point Clubhouse restaurant and bar in Queenstown's newest golf course and community. From a simple but impressive building that references traditional woolsheds of the region, the restaurant opens out to a wide deck above Lake Tewa. Locals are already making it a destination brunch and lunch spot. The stone fruit and mascarpone on pancakes is a sensation. If a round of golf is not for you, walk off your lunch on the cliffs above Lake Wakatipu.

McAdam Drive, Jack's Point, (03) 450 2050, www.jackspoint.com

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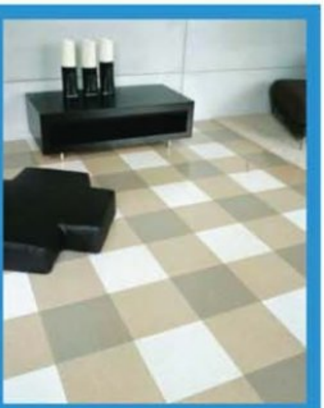

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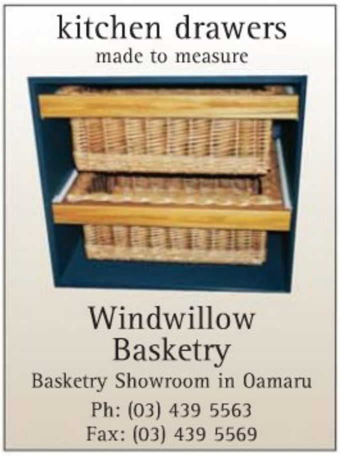

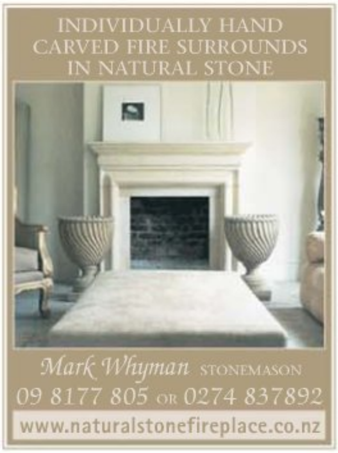

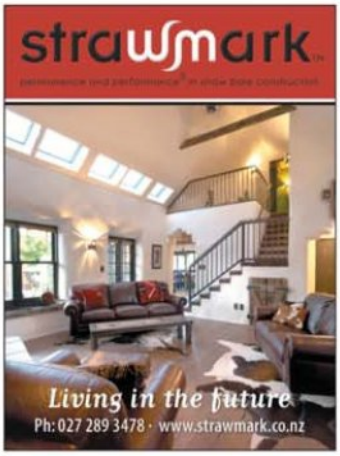

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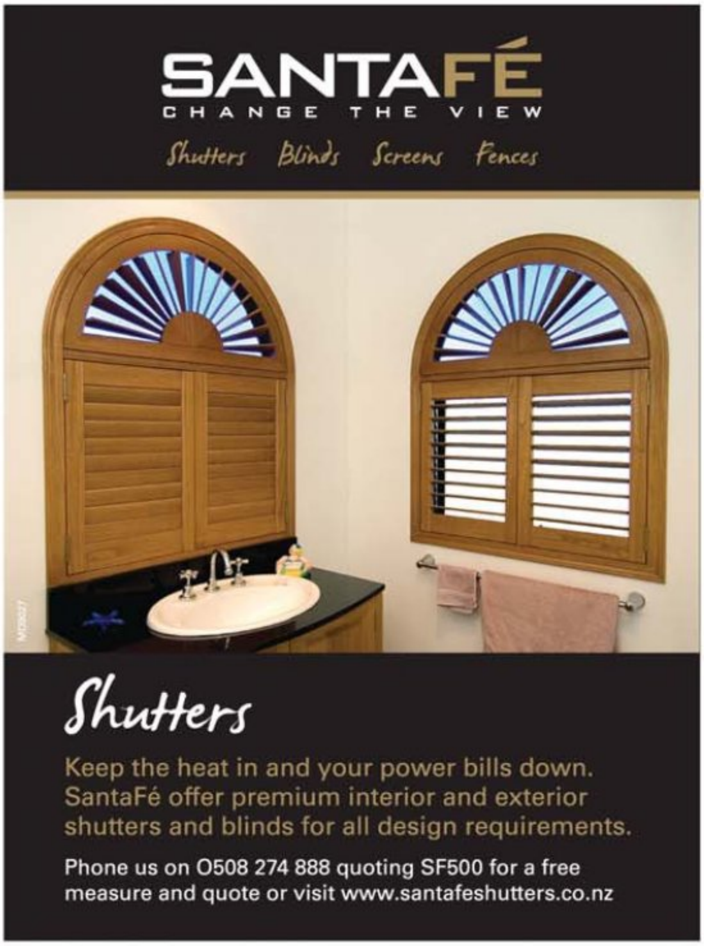

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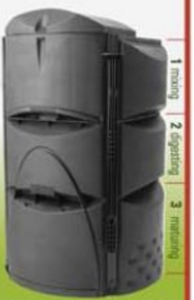

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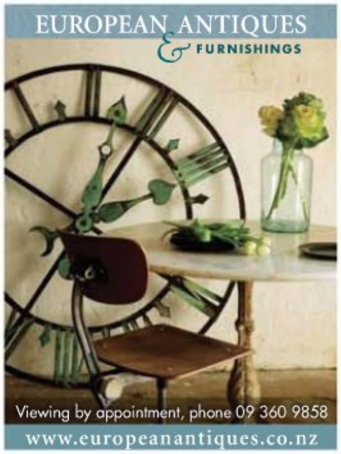

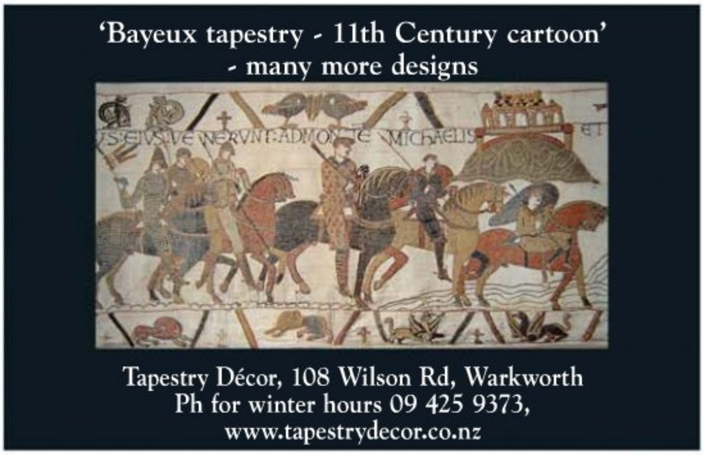

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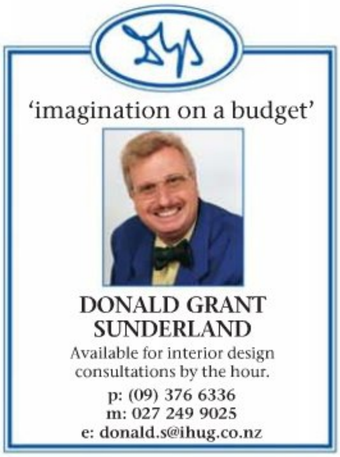

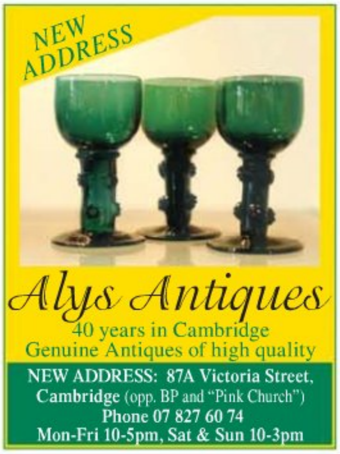

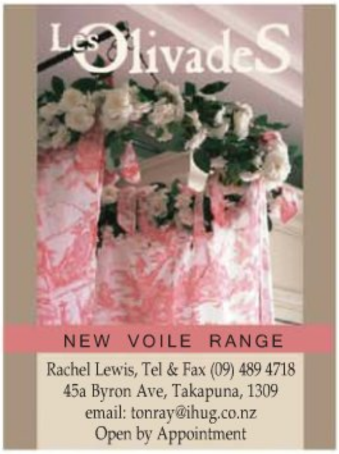

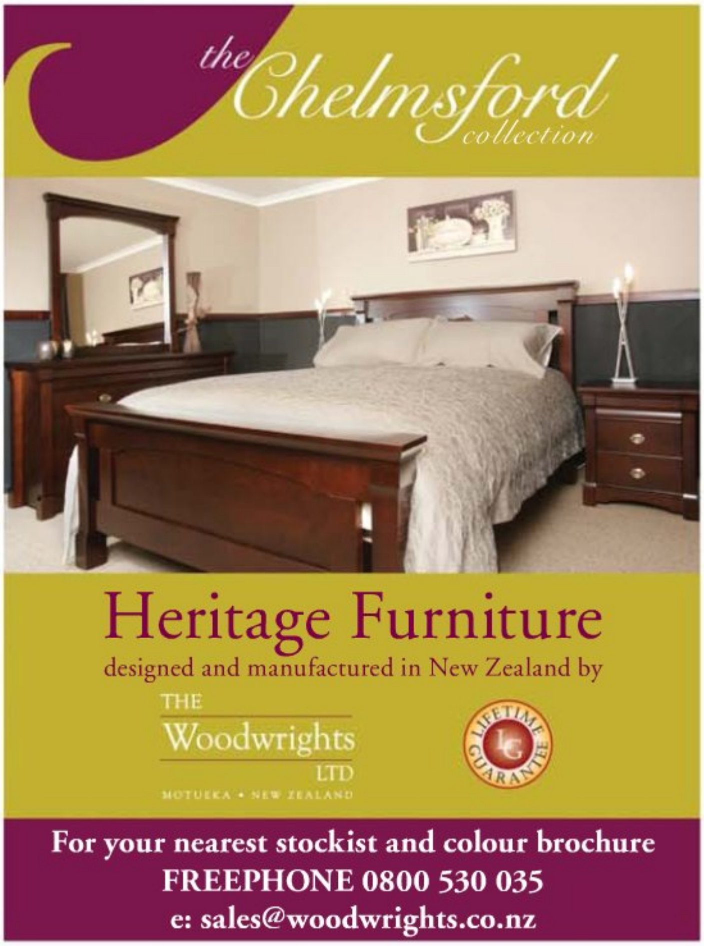

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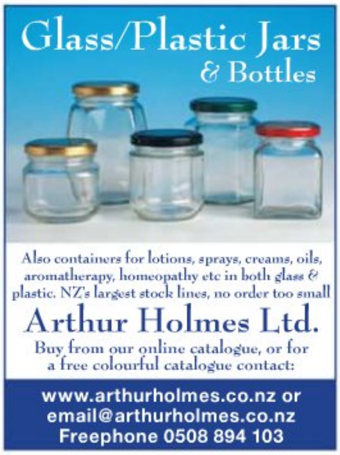

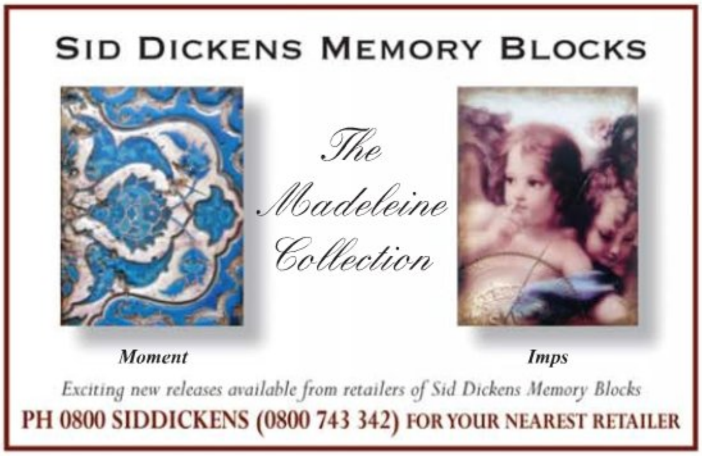

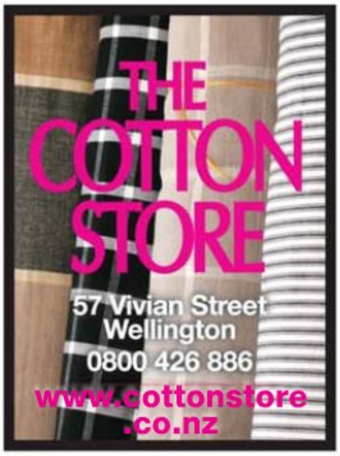

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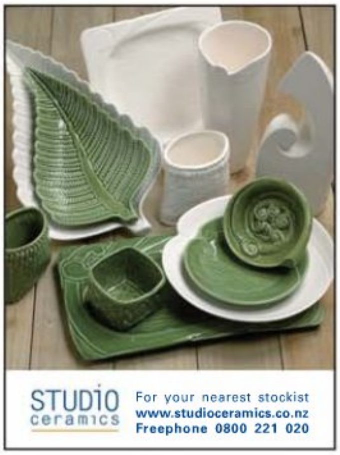

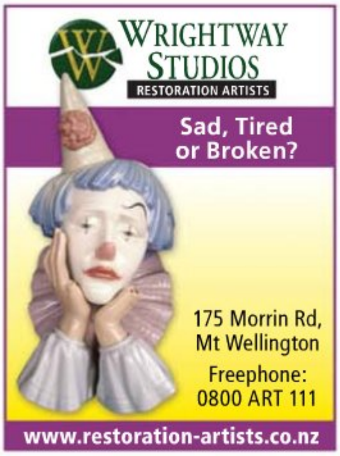

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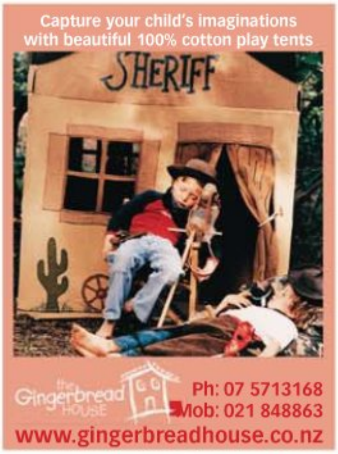

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Essence of...

Florist Davina Prankerd prefers classic design and simple styling at home

WORDS TRACEY STRANGE / **PHOTOGRAPHS** JANE USSHER & BELINDA MERRIE

When it comes to flowers, Davina Prankerd isn't one to fuss. Flowers, says the owner of Auckland store Vida Flores, should speak for themselves. Her advice: choose beautiful blooms and present them elegantly. This simple-is-best philosophy is mirrored in the household items that inspire her – a classic cake mixer and John Parker ceramics among them. Take her Riedel elongated glass decanter – "I would never be so posh as to actually use it," she says. "For me, it is a sculpture."

1 "I love pretty floral sheets." Society **pillowcases** $395/pair from Siena Home, (09) 377 7555. 2 "'Ocean Song' roses in a lovely vase look fantastic." **Glass bowl** $130 from Vida Flores, (09) 523 5454. 3 "This patchwork rug is great – it solves the problem of having to choose just one design." **Rug** POA from Source Mondial, (09) 302 3068. 4 "I do a great roast and a good pan makes it even better." **Roasting dish** $420 from The Homestore, (09) 529 9491. 5 "Jamie Oliver does so well with good, clean flavours." **Book**, *Jamie at Home* (Penguin) $75 from booksellers nationwide. 6 "You can never have too many fragrant candles." Hervé Gambs **candle** $89 from Siena Home. 7 "I have loved John Parker artworks for years." **Bottle** $520 and **orb** $450 from Masterworks Gallery, (09) 378 1256. 8 "What can you say about such extraordinary design? This Riedel decanter is a masterpiece." Riedel Swan **decanter** $650 from Glengarry Wines, (09) 379 3740. 9 "Florists are hard on their hands and this is the only cream that actually makes my hands look half decent. I have about six pots on the go at once." Nellie Tier **hand cream** $35 from Smith & Caughey's, (09) 377 4770. 10 "I live in hope that a KitchenAid mixer will make me into a great baker." KitchenAid **mixer** $999 from Milly's Kitchen, 0800 200 123. 11 "Flower books are my inspiration, particularly ones from Belgium, where the florists are extraordinary artists." **Book**, *Geert Pattyn, Master Florist* (Stichting Kunstboek) $200 from Vida Flores.

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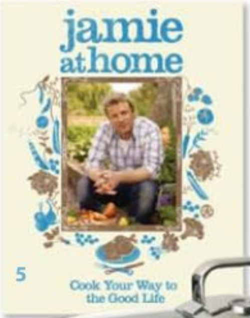

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